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III–IV

THE NEGRO IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

"The best African population, the wisest, the most enlightened that exists in the world, exists in the District of Columbia."—UNITED STATES SENATOR J. T. MORGAN.

"The Negro race is a living, not a dead, race, alive in the several respects of industry, acquisitiveness, education and religious aspiration."—REV. DR. ALEXANDER CRUMMELL.

"The better disposed class of the Negroes has signally vindicated the capacity for civilization within the limitations of personal and race impediments and in the use it has made of its opportunities."—REV. A. D. MAYO.

"I would entreat all who are working to solve this strange race problem—the hardest any nation ever had to solve—not to get section against section, North against South or South against North, or Afro-Americans against either, but to try by careful training of the young by giving them sound education—above all, teaching the trades and handicrafts of all kinds—by showing them the great future there is before the Afro-American people, to proclaim that racial misunderstanding should be forgotten, and that though there never will be, never can be, never ought to be a mingling of the races, yet each, side by side, can do much to build up this great land, of which both races are equally citizens."—ARCHDEACON FRANCIS J. CLAY MORAN.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDIES
IN
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE
HERBERT B. ADAMS, Editor

History is past Politics and Politics present History.—*Freeman*

ELEVENTH SERIES

III–IV

THE NEGRO IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BY EDWARD INGLE, A. B.
Washington, D. C.

BALTIMORE
THE JOHNS HOPKINS PRESS
PUBLISHED MONTHLY
March-April, 1893

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THE FRIEDENWALD CO., PRINTERS,
BALTIMORE.

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THE NEGRO IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

INTRODUCTION.

To determine the position which the negroes of the United States are to occupy toward the civilization of this country is a problem which should engage the sober, serious efforts of all those who desire good government and the stability of society. The solution of that problem is not to be had in ignoring facts about the race, or in hopes that the negroes will return to the homes of their forefathers. They have been in this country for two centuries and a half, they have been influenced more or less by their surroundings, they have formed attachments to the soil which may not easily be eradicated, and, as modern migration is not toward the East, they are likely to remain in the United States. They will either degenerate or advance toward the goal for which the white race is striving; but whatever their tendency, its developments and its results cannot fail to affect the white race, upon whom will largely depend the outcome.

The basis for a proper treatment of the subject is to be had only in the calm, impersonal, scientific sifting of the evidence on both sides of the slave question in all parts of the country, which is hardly possible, perhaps, for this generation; and in the honest, unprejudiced and equally scientific consideration of facts about the condition—social, moral, political, and religious—of the negroes of to-day. Truths may be revealed which may be distasteful, but they must be told if the best interests of this country are to be subserved; and when by earnest and unbiased workers in every section of the country the mass of testimony has been

gathered and classified, the man will probably have been born who will be able to review it in a brief which will find support in united public opinion.

Probably no field for the study of some of the many phases of this great problem presents better opportunities than those to be had in the District of Columbia, the seat of the general government. This territory, inhabited largely by an urban or suburban population, has always been a kind of experimental station, from law-making to rain-making, for the country; and the fact that there was foreshadowed much of the special legislation for the negro which has been embodied in the last three amendments of the Constitution, and that the life there presents many remarkable features and many extremes in various lines of human activity, makes the study interesting and instructive for the investigator. The manifestations of the character of the negro population in the District, which confront the stranger on every hand, were the incentives to the work which has resulted in the following pages, and the aim throughout has been to examine whatever material was available among official documents, the files of newspapers or in other publications, for the purpose of discovering the sources of conditions as they exist to-day, and by personal observation and inquiry among those best qualified to speak, to present those conditions in a light removed from mere theory or personal opinion.

No attempt has been made to deal with the subject of slavery except as reference had to be made to it in determining the standpoint of observation. What may be termed the treatment of the forensic and legislative side of that question has been written by Miss Mary Tremain, of the University of Nebraska, in her monograph entitled "Slavery in the District of Columbia"; but in connection with this should be read the able and conscientious work, "The Negro in Maryland," by Dr. Jeffrey R. Brackett, of the Johns Hopkins University, and its supplement, "Notes on the Progress of the Colored People of Maryland Since

the War." A like Virginia treatment is yet to come. A most valuable contribution to the literature of the ante-bellum and reconstruction periods is the "Special Report of the Commissioner of Education on the Condition and Improvement of Public Schools in the District of Columbia," submitted to the Senate, June, 1868, and to the House, with additions, June 13, 1871. This volume, which was printed in 1871, contains, beside the results of a census taken in the fall of 1867 by Dr. Franklin Hough, a minute history of the schools for the colored population in the District, prepared by M. B. Goodwin, which has furnished many facts for portions of this monograph, and a compilation showing the legal status of the negro in the country at large in respect to education in 1867.

Other material has been gathered from the Congressional Globe, the Congressional Record, the reports of the committees who investigated District affairs while it was a Territory, acts of the legislative assembly, reports of the Bureau of Education, public school reports, and reports of the District Commissioners, with which are bound the valuable statistics furnished by the Superintendent of Police, by the chief clerk of the department, Mr. Richard Sylvester, by the Health Officer, and other branches of municipal government. The census reports also contain some material, but it is chiefly of a general character, though it may be that the census, with the reports of the Commissioner of Education, will hereafter deal with the subject more minutely and furnish the basis for the true treatment of the problem, the solution of which is so important for both the whites and the negroes.

This study is the result of nearly eighteen months' investigation at the odd intervals of leisure in active newspaper work, and whatever links may be missing or wrong deductions made must not be attributed to the lack of a desire to present all necessary facts and to form an unprejudiced judgment.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January* 18, 1893.

I.

THE BASIS OF OPERATIONS.

In the spring and summer of 1862 three commissioners, appointed under an Act of Congress, were engaged at Washington in a task which was at the same time novel and significant. Compromises of eighty years had given place to force, and while the armies of two great sections were debating on the field of battle the questions involved in slavery, that question was being settled for the seat of the nation's government on a peaceable and equitable basis. It was the turning-point in the career of the negro population of the District of Columbia; it meant freedom and hope for them, and grave doubt and anxiety for the white race, who, confronted with radically changed conditions, could not readily grasp the problems presented to them. Slavery was passing, and in its disappearance were born social, economic, and political questions which to-day, after a generation has passed, are still not settled to the satisfaction of all persons concerned.

To determine the causes of this state of affairs a general idea of the character of the colored race in the District must be had, and this may not be gained by comparing their life of 1893 with that of 1860 without some knowledge of what they were before the war and of the additions to the population during the past thirty years. Slavery, though it furnished the text for many a practical or rhetorical effort in Congress during the early half of the century, cannot be said to have been a cherished favorite of the people of the District, and it is likely that it would have died a natural death long before it was legally executed had the people been left to follow their inclinations, uninfluenced by the reflections at the capital of the contending sentiments of extremists in both sections of the country, or by the fears

excited by such a movement as the Nat Turner uprising in Virginia. This would be apparent, if other evidence was lacking in a study of the statistics of population from 1810 to 1860. In the former year, when the District included the tract ceded by Virginia, the total population was 14,093, of whom 10,066 were whites, 783 free negroes, and 3,244 slaves; in the latter year, in a total population of 75,080, there were 60,764 whites, 11,131 free negroes, and 3185 slaves. The white population had increased more than five hundred per cent., the free negroes more than thirteen hundred per cent., while the slaves had decreased about one-per cent. and three-quarters. Though the increase of the white population had been pretty regular, the greatest advance having been made after 1846, when Alexandria was ceded back to Virginia, and after 1850, when the slave trade was forbidden in the District, while the number of free negroes had increased steadily, the period between 1830 and 1850 showing the greatest ratio of increase, but that following 1850 showing a tendency for the increase to be checked, the number of slaves, which rose to 4520 in 1820 and again to 3687 in 1850, had decreased by 502 in ten years and by 59 in sixty years. In 1810 the slaves constituted 22.97 per cent. of the population of the District; in 1860 they were but 4.25 per cent. of it. However, the laws which formed what was known as the "black code," and which were the embodiments of the negro code of Maryland and Virginia existing in February, 1801, and the subsequent ordinances of the municipalities within the District and the modifications of Congress, had effect not only upon the bondsmen, but upon the free negroes. Though there are instances of extreme harshness in the execution of them, and though no one would tolerate them for a moment to-day, the position which both the slaves and the free negroes as classes occupied at the outbreak of the war demonstrates not only that they had shown a wonderful fortitude and developed traits of thrift and enterprise in the face of the menacing code, but that that code had possessed for the

majority of them, except in the most important matters of education and restriction of personal liberty, the character rather of a menace than of a system of rigorous, unrelenting practice.

Slavery has been abolished, and no persons would be more opposed to its restoration in this country than those who felt its burdens the most; but it had two sides. As the field-hand was a comparatively small element in slavery as it existed in the District, the system there presented what may be termed its more favorable side, and though the slaves may have been restricted in their means of acquiring book learning, they were assisted toward acquiring this weapon of education by the whites in Sunday worship and about the house, especially before the terrors of 1831 which did much to estrange the two races; and in the daily life in the cities they, with their nimble wits, acquired a practical education which may not be had in the mere learning to read and write. On the other hand the free negroes, who were representatives of a superior element of their race and were destined to be a powerful leaven for their fellows, had many advantages in the beginning. "Many of them," says one writer who possessed excellent opportunities to study them, "were favorite family servants, who came here with congressmen from the South and with the families of other public officers, and who by long and faithful service had secured, by gift, purchase or otherwise, their freedom. Others were superior mechanics, house servants, and enterprising in various callings, who obtained their freedom by their own persevering industry. Some, also, had received their freedom before coming to this city."[1] Benjamin Banneker, the negro astronomer, assisting in surveying the District in 1791; Sophia Browning buying her husband's freedom for $400 from the proceeds of her market garden, and being in turn purchased by him; Alethia Tanner purchasing her own freedom in 1810 for $1400, and

[1] Special Report, Commissioner of Education, p. 195.

that of her sister Laurena Cook and five children in 1826; John F. Cook, one of those children, a shoemaker by trade, learning the rudiments of education while a messenger in the Treasury Department, and closing a useful life, in spite of persecution at the hands of a mob, as a minister and educator among his people, and leaving sons to carry on his work,—are but some of the examples of the spirit displayed by the free negroes. Before the date of the Nat Turner outbreak there are evidences that the relations of the two races in the District were of more trustfulness and consequently of greater friendliness than afterward; but, as one of the descendants of a negro who probably suffered most through the feeling against his race fomented by that event, writes, "The darkness that had gathered about him presented an opportunity for the exhibition of a character which, under ordinary circumstances, might never have been seen. The withdrawal of the friendly mite which had been occasionally given and the friendly word aroused a spirit of determination, self-reliance, and irrepressible energy that instantly foreshadowed eventual success."[1] There are also evidences that the mite and the friendly word were not entirely absent in the subsequent years, and the sentiments of the whites toward the negroes in spite of the "black code," and the ability of the negroes to make good even their slight advantages, are proved by their possession, at the outbreak of the war, of $650,000 in real estate and the support of their own schools and churches.

Such was in brief the condition of the negroes of the District when war, following the election of a President whose views on the question of slavery were well defined, rendered it expedient and practicable for the experiment of emancipation to be made in the District. At the outset of the second session of the Thirty-seventh Congress, in December, 1861, Senator Wilson, whose name will always be associated with those of Grimes, Sumner, and others in

[1] Public Schools of the District, 1874–75, p. 91.

connection with the efforts on behalf of the negroes of the District and of the country at large, introduced into the Senate a resolution providing that the Committee on the District of Columbia should take into consideration all measures relating to fugitives from service and all laws relating to negroes in the District, with a view to abolishing slavery in the District.

This he followed later with a bill to abolish slavery, and a bill to annul the "black code." The Senator was determined to push matters, and his speech of March, 1862, was an impassioned arraignment of the system which he and others would abolish. The question was debated at great length, and finally the bill abolishing slavery, passing the Senate April 3 and the House April 11, was signed by President Lincoln, April 16, 1862, the free negroes and those who had been placed on the straight road to freedom uniting in their churches in thanksgiving for the act.[1] The act provided that "all persons held to service or labor within the District of Columbia by reason of African descent are hereby discharged and freed of and from all claim to such service or labor, and from and after the passage of this act neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for crime, whereof the party shall be duly convicted, shall hereafter exist in said District." A sum of money not exceeding $1,000,000 was appropriated to compensate owners loyal to the government for their former slaves, it being provided that the average price for each slave should not exceed $300, and the compensation was not to extend to those persons who were disloyal to the government or who should bring slaves into the District after the passage of the act. Kidnapping was declared a felony, the punishment being placed at from five to twenty years' imprisonment. One point of additional interest about the act was the appropriation of $100,000 to aid in the colonization of free persons, including those liberated, "as may desire to

[1] Special Report, Commissioner of Education, 1871, p. 319.

emigrate to Hayti or Liberia or to such country beyond the limits of the United States as the President may determine." Both compensation and colonization, the principles which had prevailed in earlier schemes for emancipation, were still recognized, and the extreme war measure was not yet announced. In that it differed in a marked degree from the measures leading to the Thirteenth Amendment submitted February 1, 1865, and ratified in the following December, and the interests of slaveholders loyal to the government were still protected. As late as July 17, 1862, in an act "to suppress insurrection," etc., it was ordered that the slaves of those in arms against the United States were to be declared captives of war, and that all slaves "being within any place occupied by rebel forces and afterwards occupied by the forces of the United States shall be deemed captives of war and shall be forever free of their servitude and not again held as slaves." The act also provided that no slave escaping to free soil should be delivered unless the person claiming him should be able to prove his loyalty to the government, and that the President should be authorized to provide for the transportation of slaves freed under it or to use them in any way he thought proper to bring the war to a close. Even in his warning of September 22, 1862, Mr. Lincoln clung to the idea of the earlier emancipation, and when the South had refused to heed either the bribes of pecuniary relief or the threats, his emancipation proclamation of January 1, 1863, was declared by him to be "a fit and necessary war measure," and it was to have effect only in the territory actually occupied by the Confederate forces, the document expressly defining them as follows: "Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terra Bonne, La Fourche, Ste. Marie, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (excepting the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia and also the

counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Anne, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth, and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued").

But while these war measures were being advanced, the disenthralment of the three thousand slaves or more in the District was finding its complement in the careful daily sessions of the three commissioners, Daniel R. Goodloe, Horatio King, and J. M. Brodhead, who had been appointed under the act of April 16 to arrange for the compensation of the owners. They began their inquest April 28, and at the outset were confronted with the fact that they could depend upon no person in Washington to appraise the slaves. "There are few persons," they said, "especially in a community like Washington, where slavery has been for many years an interest of comparatively trifling importance, who possess the knowledge and discrimination as to the value of slaves which are necessary to a just apportionment of compensation under the law." It was, they claimed, difficult to assign value to slaves, and consultation with an experienced dealer in slaves, Mr. B. M. Campbell, of Baltimore, led to the conclusion that "Slaves in fact cannot be said to have had a current saleable value since the commencement of the war; while their intrinsic value on the 16th day of April, as determined by the undiminished value of the products of the soil and the undiminished wages of labor, was not less than formerly. Indeed, in both these respects it was greater, since there has been a constant rise of prices, both of labor and products." Campbell, too, had ceased to purchase slaves since May, 1861, as "all communication with the South was then cut off." He, however, gave the commissioners some figures of his purchases between February 2 and May 18 of that year. Of thirty-seven slaves whom he had handled, the majority of them being in the prime of life, and four being children, the average cost had been $636.75. Other diffi-

culties in the way of reaching a just average were found in the varying character of the slaves. The chief support of some families had been derived from hiring out their slaves, while in other cases expenses had been reduced by employing the slaves at home. Some slaves were held for a term of years or for the life of the owner, some were securities for the payment of debts, and in some instances there existed an agreement between the slaves and their owners that emancipation was to be given upon the payment of a certain sum. The commissioners finally adopted the plan of classifying the slaves "according to their value before the commencement of the war, and reducing these classes to the average compensation allowed by law." According to their report the whole number of petitions under the original act was 966, of which 909 were granted, 36 were rejected entirely, and 21 were rejected in part. Under an additional act of July 12, 1862, whereby slaves were permitted to file their own schedules, and the right of negroes to testify was emphasized, 161 petitions were presented, of which 139 were granted and 22 were rejected. Later, thirteen claims for twenty-eight slaves, filed by persons who had been prevented from one cause or another from availing themselves of the provisions of the act of April, were allowed, the sum involved being $7212.50, and the total amount of compensation being kept within the million dollars. The largest amount paid to any one person was $17,771.85 for his sixty-nine slaves, and the smallest sum allowed for any slave was $21.90 for a male infant.

It is noticeable that in some cases the beneficiaries under the act were negroes, one man receiving $2168.10 for ten slaves, another $832.20 for two, another $43.80 for one, and another $547.50 for one, while from the $4073.40 placed to the credit of the Sisters of the Visitation of Georgetown, $298.75 were deducted, as that amount had been paid to the Sisters by Ignatius Tilghman toward the purchase of the freedom of his family. The claims for two free-born negroes were not allowed, and some of the slaves were too feeble by reason of advanced years to be of any value.

Mr. Campbell was of great assistance to the commissioners in estimating the value of the slaves, and it is related that his last resort, when very great difficulties were presented, was an examination of the negroes' teeth. The commissioners, as well as the government, were greatly aided also by Mr. W. R. Woodward, upon whom much of the clerical work fell. They had some curious experiences during their labors. For instance, one man brought before them could not give any idea of his age beyond the statement that "during General Washington's war he could catch a horse and feed him"; and when questioned as to the value of his services, indicated that he could plow in one day half as much as an able-bodied man. A case was presented of a slave whose former owner had died, willing his slaves to his wife for her lifetime, and after her death they were to be freed and were to inherit his Maryland farm. Some owners were slow to take advantage of the act, being under the impression that their sentiments regarding the war would debar them; but they were assured that they were really beneficiaries, provided they had committed no overt act against the government. Revelations were made of attempts to evade the law by the removal of slaves into territory not affected by it, and it was shown that one man had transported all his slaves ten days before the act became a reality, to his farm which lay partly in Maryland and partly in the District, and had housed them in a tenement built beyond the District line, to which their daily food was sent by members of the family from the dwelling within the District. Such cases as these led to the supplementary act of July 12, 1862, which provided that "all persons held to service or labor under the laws of any State and who at any time since the sixteenth of April Anno Domini 1862, by the consent of the persons to whom such service and labor is claimed to be owing, have been actually employed within the District of Columbia, or who shall be hereafter thus employed, are hereby declared free and forever released

from such service, anything in the laws of the United States or any State to the contrary notwithstanding."[1]

Upon the passage of the emancipatory act some slaves left the homes of their former owners to take places elsewhere, some left the District to find work, but others remained to mingle with the thousands of men who had been born free or who had become so without the legal intervention of the government or the exercise of a right founded upon might.

Presently, though, they were joined by others of their race, who had not enjoyed either the comparative advantages of bondage in a city where population was denser, and consequently where a gaining of practical knowledge was easier, or the opportunities of free negroes, though hedged in by restrictions arising from the presence of a slave element. The safeguards against migration from Maryland and Virginia, which had been asked of Congress, had not been provided, and the hegira from those two States to the negroes' Land of Canaan had begun. It continued for many years, the greatest number of negroes arriving as fugitives, or contrabands, before 1867, and another large inflation of this portion of the population occurring between 1870 and 1874. A comparison of the populations in two decades shows not only the marvelous rapidity with which the negroes flocked to the capital, but also that the fears of 1862 of citizens of the District were not unfounded. Between 1860 and 1870 the population of the District increased from 75,080, of whom 14,316 were negro, to 131,700, of whom 43,404 were negro; and between 1870 and 1880 the population increased to 177,624, of whom 59,596 were negro. Of the negroes in the District in 1870 but 13,448 were natives of the District, while 16,785 had come from Virginia and West Virginia and 11,720 from Maryland; and of the negro population of 1880, Virginia had furnished 19,913 and

[1] The details of this remarkable transaction are given in full in the report of the Commissioners, Executive Documents, No. 42, Thirty-Eighth Congress, 1st session.

Maryland 12,245,—the natives of the District numbering 24,775.

Midway between 1860 and 1874 a most thorough census of the District was made under the auspices of the Bureau of Education, and the figures appearing in the report of that work are full of suggestiveness. The white population was then 88,327, and the negroes numbered 38,663, an increase of 24,347 in seven years; this increase being largely due to the horde of negroes from the near-by States, whose opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of any occupation save that of manual labor of the simplest form had been limited. The following table will show the situation at a glance. It is formed upon statistics collected by Dr. Franklin B. Hough, though it does not include by any means every one of the interesting details made public by him.[1]

	White.	Negro.
Population	88,327	38,663
Owners of Real Estate	6,485	1,399
Renters of Real Estate	8,895	4,595
Voters	13,294	6,648
Married couples	14,147	5,509
Children of school age	21,447	10,246
Children in public schools	5,349	450
Children in private schools	5,352	232
Unable to read, over 15 years	1,812	11,025
Unable to write, over 15 years	2,150	12,615
In government service	12,690	822
In personal service	2,122	3,647
In trade and finance	2,052	98
Owning and working land	440	245
In arts and mechanics	4,503	577
Laborers, etc	2,460	3,956
Churches	43	14

From the figures in this table, particularly those relating to illiteracy, may be obtained some idea of the character of the population which was to evolve into the people who constitute one-third of the inhabitants of the District to-day.

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[1] Special Report, Commissioner of Education, pp. 38–48.

The community in which they had found a home was divided in its sentiments toward the negroes, as it included those who had found at Washington a field for a thorough test of their ideas of philanthropy, those whose sentiments against the negroes had been intensified by their helplessness in the face of the legislation, which they believed was likely to inure only to the disadvantage of the capital, and those who cared neither for the whites nor for the negroes except as possibilities for the furtherance or blocking of their designs. The swarms of adventurers who flocked to Washington in the closing years of the war and later, belonging to the class of whites which found its most congenial home there, were not of a character likely to benefit the mass of ignorance, which found little sympathy among the older residents. Even the negroes themselves had their distinctions, not always well defined, perhaps, but yet capable of being classed broadly as of those who had been free before the war, those who had been liberated in 1862, and those who had entered the District as fugitives or as contrabands of war.

To deal with these diverse elements so as to make them of value to the community, instead of causing them to become drawbacks, was a problem requiring all the tact, wisdom and judgment of statesmanship. To its solution, however, were too frequently brought partisanship and enthusiasm lacking reason or experience; and when the movements of the past generation are calmly reviewed, the only conclusion is that of astonishment that the negroes, in spite of dissensions among themselves, neglect or hostility on the part of some of the whites, and short-sighted efforts in their behalf by would-be friends, have reached the advanced position in which some are able to maintain themselves to-day.

II.

APPLYING THE LEVER.

If the negroes in the District before the war can be said to have been remarkable in any respect, they were so in their desire for education; but in this they received comparatively little encouragement from the authorities. Indeed, the expansion of population consequent upon the war was necessary to make the white public school system of the capital an important factor in municipal life. Although the movement for the public instruction of children had begun in 1805 by trustees, with Thomas Jefferson as their president, many causes contributed to its unpopularity, as shown in 1840 in the attendance of 776 children upon private schools and but 213 upon public ones, and in the expenditure of but $257,721.74 for the system during the eight years immediately preceding the war. Whatever benefits were to be derived from the system, though, were not extended to the free negroes, and at the outset they were obliged to depend mostly upon their own resources for acquiring knowledge, supplemented by the efforts of earnest men and women, who labored principally in the Sunday schools, where provision was made for negro children. With an energy surprising, when viewed against the background of their antecedents, the negroes determined to gratify their thirst for knowledge, and within a few months after the first two public school-houses had been built the first school for negroes was opened in 1807.

It was built by three men, recently emerged from slavery,—George Bell, Nicholas Franklin, and Moses Liverpool, and was taught by a white man named Lowe. Others were started later, the occasional admission of a negro to a white private school not apparently meeting the requirements of the case; an attempt at a free school was even made, and

after the line of demarcation between the whites and negroes had been for the first time sharply drawn in the Sunday schools, the number of private schools for negroes increased and their scope widened, until, at the outbreak of the war, when the negro population of school age was 3172, it is estimated that 1200 were in the schools. Though white teachers at first were the principal teachers, intelligent negro men and women gradually took their places, until the instruction by the whites was limited to such schools as that of Father Vanlomen, in Georgetown. Their schools ranged from the mere primary ones to those in which the higher branches, French and music, were taught, and the prospectus of one of the latter displays the spirit which animated such undertakings. "The object of this academy," wrote Arabella C. Jones in her prospectus in 1852, "is of great importance, particularly to those who are devoid of schools in their vicinity, and also to society at large. Here the poor are educated gratuitously, the orphans clothed, educated and a good trade given them. Females in this age are naturally destined to become either mothers of families or household servants. As mothers, is it not necessary that they should be skilled in habits of industry and modesty, in order to transmit it to posterity? As domestics, should they not be tutored to the virtues of honesty, integrity and sobriety? Last, though not least, many of our citizens of color are emigrating to Liberia, and it is necessary, as well-wishers of our race, that our children be well educated, in order to impart their knowledge to the illiterate."

This was originally quoted by M. B. Goodwin, who has preserved for the future student the story of the labors of the founders of the negroes' educational system at the capital and of such pioneers as William Costin, Louise Parke Costin, Henry Smothers, John F. Cook, Myrtilla Miner, Arabella Jones, Mary Wormley, Alexander Hays, John H. Fleet, Charles H. Middleton, and others, who in spite of hardships, drawbacks and at times persecution of

one shade or another, struggled persistently toward the light, and justified the conclusion that "it is worthy of observation, also, that in no case has a colored school ever failed for the want of scholars. The parents were always glad to send their children, and the children were always ready to go, even when too poor to be decently fed or clothed. When a school failed it was for want of money, and not for want of appreciation of the benefits of education."[1]

This eagerness was marked when, in 1862, emancipation of the slaves was followed by the first step taken toward the real emancipation of the class of which the slaves formed a small proportion. The question of the public support of schools for the negroes had been mooted in 1848 and 1858, but had never reached any definite shape until coincidentally with the debates on the freeing of the slaves were considered measures for the education of their race, and within a little more than a month after the act of emancipation of April 16, 1862, its fit complement was had in the acts initiating a public school system for the negroes. This movement was remarkable in more respects than one. In the first place it was not born of legislative sentiment alone, for, upon the development of opposition, energetic negroes, including some who were at the time interested in private schools, went to the trouble of collecting statistics proving that their demands were reasonable; the most striking fact evolved, perhaps, being that to which Senator Grimes alluded on April 29, that the negroes were paying $3600 taxes upon $650,000 worth of real estate, and that they were sharing the tax of ten cents on every $100 devoted to the support of white schools exclusively. Another curious feature was the enactment of a school law for the county section of the District one day in advance of that for the cities of Washington and Georgetown, inasmuch as an effort to establish a white public school system in the county in 1856 had proved ineffective because it was not

[1] Special Report, Commissioner of Education, 1871, p. 222.

ratified at an election in which women were allowed to vote and in which they cast their ballots generally with the opposition. The act of May 20, 1862, provided for a tax of one-eighth of one per cent. upon the property of negroes outside the cities for the support of schools for their children; and that of May 21, 1862, ordered that ten per cent. of the tax levied in the two cities upon negro property should be devoted to negro public schools. In the county the funds were to be under the control of seven trustees for all the schools, and in the cities under the control of the trustees of the white schools. Both acts proved ineffective, even though, to set at rest all apprehension about the disposition of the separate fund in the cities, three trustees for the negro schools in Washington and Georgetown were appointed by the Secretary of the Interior under an act of July 11, 1862; and in 1864 another act became the fundamental law for the whole District. This provided that the authorities should set apart each year from all the funds received for educational purposes "such proportionate part thereof as the number of colored children between the ages of six and seventeen years in the respective cities bear to the whole number thereof, for the purpose of establishing and sustaining public schools in said cities for the education of colored children," and a similar arrangement was made for the county schools. In the two years following the original act for the cities but $736.86 had been credited to the separate school fund, and it was not until March, 1864, that the first public school for negroes was opened in a negro church, and not until the next year that the first building for school purposes only was occupied. The local authorities still construing the act in a manner different from the advocates of the negroes, Congress, by act of July 23, 1866, ruled that the act of 1864 should be so construed "as to require the cities of Washington and Georgetown to pay over to the trustees of the colored schools of said cities such a proportionate part of all moneys received or expended for school or educational purposes in said

cities, including the cost of sites, buildings, improvements, furniture, books, and all other expenditures on account of schools, as the colored children, between the ages of six and seventeen years in the respective cities, bear to the whole number of children, white and colored, between the same ages; that the money shall be considered due and payable to said trustees on the first day of October of each year; and if not then paid over to them, interest at the rate of ten per centum per annum on the amount unpaid may be demanded and collected." It was also arranged that contributions from persons disposed to aid in the education of the negro should be kept distinct from the general school fund.

While as late as November, 1867, the trustees of the negro schools were complaining that they had been hampered by the refusal of the corporation of Washington to execute the acts of Congress relating to the schools, affairs in the county had progressed much more smoothly, especially after an appropriation by Congress, on July 28, 1866, of $10,000 to purchase sites and erect the necessary buildings; and the negroes' schools fared as well as the whites', an estimate of expenditures from 1864 to 1870 showing that the former had received $43,057.73 and the latter $50,721.91, and the former class of pupils having really the better accommodations.

During the earlier years of the war, when the migration to the capital of contrabands and refugees began, efforts were made to reach them in schools. The first school devoted exclusively to slave children was opened in the county in August, 1861, by a negro woman, but the next year the American Tract Society began its work among the contrabands, and its example was followed by the American Tract Society of Boston, the American Missionary Society, the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association, Volunteer Teachers' Association, the Philadelphia Friends' Freedmen's Relief Association, the African Civilization Society, the Reformed Presbyterian Mission, the Old School Presby-

terian Mission, the New York Freedmen's Relief Association, the New England Freedmen's Aid Commission, the New England Freedmen's Aid Society, the New England Friends' Mission, the Washington Christian Union, the Universalists of Maine, and others. Their work was carried on in the basements of negro churches, in temporary barracks and other makeshifts, and extended to men, women and children. At first there were dissensions, which, however, were removed, and finally through the efforts of A. E. Newton, who was, in 1867, appointed superintendent of the negro public schools by the trustees, the cooperation of all the interests was secured and the way was paved for the public schools continuing the work of the relief societies, when all but one withdrew their aid in 1868. Great aid was given at this period by the Freedmen's Bureau, which, not limiting its assistance to schools for primary instruction, did much toward the establishing of Howard University, which was incorporated March 2, 1867, and in which no distinction was made on account of race, color or sex, though it had originally been intended for the education of negro men alone.[1]

Some of these schools were open by day and some by night, the total number of day schools in May, 1864, including one public school, being 12, with 23 teachers and 1200 pupils, and in 1867 being 62, with 80 teachers and 4228 pupils, the trustees of the public schools at that time controlling 5 schools, with 7 teachers and 450 pupils, and the total sum received from the North between 1863 and 1867 amounting to $135,000. At this time the extremes of the negro race were represented in the schools, and while in one private institution in 1868, of fifty pupils, 16 were taking music lessons, two years before Miss Susan Walker had been subjected to indignities in the conduct of her school which will bear comparison with the violence of "a set of

[1] Wayland Seminary, an institution still influential, was organized during this period.

ragamuffins" of 1835, the annoyances of negro children from white youths at a subsequent period, and the treatment of some of those connected with Howard University in its earlier history. The chronicler tells it in this simple language: "December 1 the school was opened in one of the barrack buildings, and soon Miss Walker had under training, six hours a day, about 70 scholars, mostly women, who were taught various kinds of plain sewing, she preparing the work for them, cutting the garments, etc., in the evening. As these women could not afford to take the time even for instruction, unless receiving some remuneration, Miss Walker adopted the plan of paying them proportionately from the articles of clothing made. In September of the next year, 1866, a regiment of cavalry took up its quarters near her school, causing her great annoyance and much anxiety, as well as disturbing the school work. The officer in command gave her assurance of the fullest protection, but the soldiers finally broke into the school-house and destroyed or took away private property and private papers,—a summary way of declaring their creed on the subject of educating contrabands."[1]

The conferring of the suffrage upon the negroes and the accession to the mayoralty, in June, 1868, of one of their particular friends, was followed by further agitation in Congress for their schools, and in the summer of that year the Senate, under a misunderstanding of the wishes of the negroes, passed a bill abolishing the offices of separate trustees, and the matter being forgotten in the lapse of several months, the same measure was passed by the House in February, 1869. Immediately the negroes were aroused, and they flocked to their old rallying points, the churches, and set forth their wishes in strong resolutions. They feared that the removal of negro trustees would bring about the same condition of affairs as had made the act of July 11, 1862, a necessity, and that the existence of the schools

[1] Special Report, Commissioner of Education, 1871, p. 242.

would depend upon local politics alone. There was some little hesitation about taking this stand, because some thought that the negroes might be considered as opposing Congress; but the final resolutions looked to a change in the whole system, which was thought to reflect distinctions in race and color. In view of the position of the negroes of the two cities, President Johnson vetoed the measure, and called the attention of Congress to the statement that the trustees for the negro schools, two of whom were negroes, had given satisfaction to their constituency, and therefore he saw no reason for transferring their duties to others. It was at this time, when the negroes had begun to be prominent in the police and fire departments of the city and in other phases of municipal life, that the question of mixed schools was incontinently agitated, culminating in a debate in Congress in the early spring of 1871, in which the effort was unsuccessfully made to remove all restrictions on account of color from all the public schools, and which also produced the statement in the Senate that for eighteen months or two years the board of trustees for the negro schools had been in a controversy among themselves, "fighting constantly at their meetings," the latter clause not meaning, of course, that they had come to blows.[1]

Under the territorial government which followed this debate, some modifications were made in the administration of the negro schools. Under an act of the Legislative Assembly of March 3, 1873, George F. T. Cook, who had been chosen in 1868 superintendent for the negro schools and who still occupies that position, was appointed superintendent by the Governor, and his report began to appear with that of the superintendent of the white schools, the trustees were increased in number to nine, and the acts of Assembly laying a tax for education, instead of specially designating the amounts for the two systems, read "for the support of public schools, including colored schools," though

[1] Congressional Globe, 1871, pp. 1054–1061.

in expending the funds the proportion of white and negro pupils to the whole school population appears to have remained as a basis. The abolition of the experiment in 1874 produced other changes. At that time there were more than forty school trustees for four different systems of schools,—twenty for the white schools of Washington, five for the white schools of Georgetown, nine for the negro schools of Washington and Georgetown, and seven for the white and negro schools of the county. The three Commissioners of the District appointed by the President consolidated these boards in August, 1874, into one board of fifteen members, increased, however, in the next month to nineteen, to the great benefit of the schools resulting from a uniformity of supervision, discipline, text-books and methods of instruction, there being some slight modifications to suit peculiar conditions; and while the white superintendent was given oversight of all the white schools and the negro schools of the county, the negro schools of the two cities remained under their own superintendent. The same administration continued when the form of government for the District crystallized in 1878 into its existing form; but since July 15, 1882, the board of trustees has been composed of but nine members, three of them being negroes; and from one of seven divisions in 1879, the growth of the negro school had, by February, 1891, made necessary three divisions, with a supervising principal in each, the eighth division having been created in the session of 1882-83.

During the thirty years from the time when Congress first took a hand in the negro school affairs, they have advanced almost as rapidly as the white schools in points of attendance, administration and methods of instruction. Though the first teacher of a negro public school in the District was a negro woman, with a white woman as an assistant, the problem about the proper kind of teachers was at first similar to that presented in the negro private schools before the war. In the first ten years of the system the teachers were in a great degree white women from the

North; but the change from white teachers to negro was begun in the sixties, in 1869 the fifty schools being equally divided among them. At that time but eighteen of the negro teachers were natives of the District.[1] At present all negro schools have teachers of the negro race. The schools originally of a primary character gradually enlarged their field; between 1871 and 1875 there was a preparatory course advanced beyond the grammar schools, and in 1876 the colored High School graduated its first pupils, and has since sent its graduates to Cornell, Howard, Harvard universities, the University of Michigan and Oberlin College; while the Normal School, which began operations a few years later, has furnished material for teachers of the local schools. The teachers of reconstruction times had realized the necessity for some sort of manual training among their pupils, and this idea was later incorporated in the public school system and in the institutions for higher education. Drawing was introduced into the public schools in 1875, and the establishing in 1880 by Mrs. Woodbury of the First Mission School for cooking, with the subsequent organization at Washington of the National Industrial Association, gave an impetus to this most important branch of teaching. In 1883 industrial training became a part of the

[1] A curious commentary upon the situation at this time is had in the circular of the trustees, issued in September, 1869. They said: "It is our determination to elevate the character of the schools by insisting on a high standard of qualifications in the teachers. This can be done only by employing the best teachers that our money will procure irrespective of color. While we think it right to give preference in our schools to colored teachers, their qualifications being equal, yet we deem it a violation of our official oath to employ inferior teachers when superior ones can be had for the same money. It is no discredit to admit that the number of colored teachers, at least in this District, who can compete successfully with those of the hitherto more favored class, especially those from the Northern States, is at present small. When our young men and women shall have enjoyed equal advantages for a sufficient length of time, we may expect this will be changed." Special Report, Commissioner of Education, p. 257.

curriculum of Howard University, and the demands of this branch of instruction have so increased that a separate building is now devoted to it for the pupils of the preparatory and normal departments. The outfit includes a carpenter shop, tin shop, bookbindery, tailor and shoe shops, kitchen, and printing office, from which is issued monthly The Howard Standard. The other departments of the institution, which in 1892 had 562 pupils, are theological, medical, law, and collegiate, the students being confined to no race, sex or color, but including whites, negroes, West Indians, and coming from such extremes as Africa and Japan.[1]

Manual training was introduced into the High School in 1886, where also at present the boys have the advantage of a military drill, and instruction in physical culture is given in the primary and grammar grades. The system of manual training as extended through the different grades embraces drawing, clay modeling, paper cutting, cooking, carpentry, turning and metal work, and it has not only been of great advantage to the pupils, but the results have demonstrated the capabilities of the negro race in this direction to the satisfaction of those who have watched its growth.[2]

The schools which, with the assistance of the relief societies, had pupils of three generations at once, have evolved into a system devoted entirely to children, and from one school, with forty pupils in 1864, the negro schools have

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[1] An account of the history of industrial training at Howard University, by Prof. W. P. Mitchell, is given on pp. 330, 331 of Part II of the publication just issued by the Bureau of Education on "Industrial and Manual Training in Public Schools."

[2] Isaac Edwards Clarke, in commenting on their exhibition, said: "The step from the condition of their original African barbarian ancestors to the present development of these children of American freedom is a long one, and one the study of which, of interest to all students of ethnology, must be of surpassing interest to those who hope for the progress of all mankind. How much of this evolution is to be attributed to the result of the two centuries of training and association of these native Africans and their children

increased to more than two hundred schools, with 14,490 pupils, while the attendance upon private schools has decreased from 1200 to about 650, with 410 in parochial schools. The trustees, though, have failed to be entirely satisfied about the work which is being done for the education of the negroes, and the president of the board in 1891 wrote as follows on this point:

"The seventh and eighth divisions embracing the colored schools of the city have been a subject of serious thought with the whole board of trustees. The question has been asked by the best class of colored citizens and by others who feel a deep interest in the success of their schools, 'Are we getting the best results obtainable for the expenditure of means?' From the best information that I, as the president of the board of trustees, have been able to obtain, I am clearly of the opinion that we do not. I have been visited by and have consulted with the most intelligent and educated of the colored citizens, with whom it has been a subject of anxious thought. 'What,' say they, 'shall we do to improve our schools? We know that we are not obtaining the best results; we are not abreast of the white schools, nor do we yet expect to be; but we are too far behind them, and such should not be the case.' We have intelligent, earnest men in the board of trustees, representing more nearly the colored schools, who give their time and personal supervision to the schools of their respective divisions. Yet the work is not what it should be. There must be a reason for it. Some of the supervising principals and teachers of

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with their white masters under the hard conditions of slavery, and how much is solely due to the inspiring influence of freedom during the past quarter of a century, is a problem in equity, for the relative proportion of credit due to each were not easy justly to apportion. It may not be denied, however, that the average slave of 1860 was, in all that makes the civilization of a race possible, far in advance of his savage kin in Africa. If in nothing else he was advantaged, he had in the acquisition of English as his native language, gained a priceless possession, a master-key to all knowledge." Industrial and Manual Training in Public Schools, pp. 248–249.

colored schools are men fully capable by both education and culture to lift these schools to a higher standard than they have yet attained. But there seems to be a something somewhere that prevents it. What is it? I submit this question to the consideration of the Commissioners of the District."

As far back as 1873 the trustees, recognizing that humanity as well as public interests demanded that provision should be made for educating those who had been given the responsibilities of citizenship, discovered that the work of the schools was hampered by home influences, the parents being unable to discipline their children properly or to supplement the studies at school with home instruction; and in spite of nearly twenty years of labor, somewhat similar conditions were the subject of comment by the superintendent of the negro schools in 1891. This opinion was to the effect that difficulty in training the children to the correct use of language was due to "the large and constantly opposing forces of the home and its association." And to the absence of a cultured home, which is not the growth of a generation, is traced the disproportionate amount of illiteracy among the negroes in spite of the equipment of their public schools, the conduct of night schools during certain months, the gradual introduction of free books in the different grades, the gathering of libraries in the different schools, aggregating 3000 volumes, through the individual efforts of teachers and pupils, and the general results which should be expected from additions each year to the community of graduates of the high school. At times the school authorities squint toward compulsory education, which is permitted under the act of 1864; but this has never been executed because the attendance upon both the white and negro schools has been fully equal to the provisions for it, and since the two systems have been operating with as little friction as possible, the number of negroes in the schools has been in the same proportion to their portion of the population of school age as the attendance upon the white

schools has been to white children between the ages of 6 and 17 years.[1]

In the report of the Commissioner of Education for 1886 the fact was noted that while the attendance upon the white schools was maintained in all the grades, that upon the negro schools diminished as the grades ascended. This gives the clue to a partial explanation of the failure of the negro population to be benefited by the system equally with the whites, and behind it is the bed-rock reason,—the poverty of parents and the necessity for many of the children to aid in some way in supporting the family preventing them from pursuing the whole course and even from remaining in school during a year at a time. Figures of the police census of June, 1892, throw a flood of light upon this situation. In that year the white population was 173,610, of whom 36,272 were of school age, 30,085 of whom were at school and 2948 were earning wages. But the negro population, 84,821, furnished a school population of 18,726, with 13,041

[1] The following table is a good basis for a comparison of the statistics of white and negro schools since 1880. In the white schools' statistics are included the negro pupils in the county schools, their number being as 1 to 23 of the whites, and the Normal School is omitted from the negro statistics.

Year ending June 30.	Pupils.			Teachers.		
	White.	Negro.	Total.	White.	Negro.	Total.
1880	18,378	8,061	26,439	306	128	434
1881	19,153	8,146	27,299	327	134	461
1882	19,031	8,289	27,320	342	143	485
1883	19,836	8,710	28,546	358	147	505
1884	21,221	9,167	30,388	371	154	525
1885	21,267	9,598	30,865	393	162	555
1886	22,198	10,138	32,336	421	174	595
1887	23,073	10,345	33,418	438	182	620
1888	23,810	11,040	34,850	466	188	654
1889	24,594	11,170	35,764	496	197	693
1890	25,468	11,438	36,906	534	211	745
1891	26,354	12,132	38,386	569	226	795
1892	30,085	13,041	43,126	612	283	895

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at school and 2870 earning wages. The fluctuations in attendance, though, seem to be lessening each year, and the advance in material welfare of the population indicated thereby may so extend as to place the attendance through the whole system on a plane with that in the white schools.

Lack of culture and wealth among the great body of the negro population may account in part for the inability of the negro children as a class to be equal in literacy to white children of the same age; but another drawback may be found in the teachers. More than once have the trustees made a point of commending the attainments and capabilities of the present superintendent, and in 1879 they had this to say in commenting upon the satisfactory condition of the negro schools:

"Nor can it occasion surprise that such should be the case to those who have acquainted themselves with the extraordinary ability and unremitting zeal exhibited by the superintendent of the colored schools in the administration of the affairs of his peculiar department. To properly appreciate the high order of talent and the degree of industry which have characterized the performance of his official duties, it is to be borne in mind that his task, because of the former anomalous relations of the colored schools to the rest of the system, has, from its inception, been eminently creative and largely dependent for its successful accomplishment upon the resources of his unaided genius. To his personal efforts is to be attributed the rapid advance made, in recent years, by that department of our public schools and its entire harmony with the general scheme of instruction."[1]

These qualities of the superintendent are his rightly by inheritance, and they are manifest in the comprehensive reports which he furnishes each year. He early realized the advantages to be derived from the opportunities for local training of the teachers for the local schools of their own color, but has not been backward in criticising imperfections

[1] Public School Report, 1878–79, p. 17.

in the Normal School results. A negro critic of his race, at a recent meeting, made this statement: "Make a colored girl a school-teacher, and when she draws her first month's salary she refuses to speak to other girls." This was an exaggerated statement of a germ of truth which finds partial confirmation in the report of 1889 of the principal of the Normal School. Her observation was that young negro girls too frequently chose teaching as a profession without due regard to its importance, and that their disappointment about obtaining positions, resulting in their passion getting the better of their judgment, did not tend to "the moral elevation of either pupils or school." On this same line the superintendent, believing that the average product of the Normal School is good, has had occasion to observe in 1890 that the graduates lacked experience, and more or less "that more pronounced personal and moral character whose growth is conditioned by maturer years, and which, in itself, presents an embodiment of those virtues whose silent influences in the school-room contribute so largely to the proper bent of youthful character."[1]

These defects in the teaching class, however, are counteracted in part by the enthusiasm of individuals, and in criticising existing conditions it must be remembered that hardly a generation has passed since the means of any public education were given the negro race in the District, and that the history of the race in this country before that time reveals very little of the mode of life which would be likely to produce either a teaching or a learning class; but the spectacle of elderly persons in the night schools, of newsboys seeking at odd moments to acquire at Howard University the rudiments of an industrial training, and of pupils in the other schools bringing their breakfast to school in order to be prompt in attendance, not only indicates that the race has lost none of the eagerness for learning which characterized it in antebellum days, but also is full of promise of greater development of the schools in the future.

[1] District Commissioners' Reports, 1889, p. 979; 1890, p. 972; 1891, p. 910.

III.

STRIVING FOR EQUALITY.

Under the old régime, free negroes in the District were affected not only indirectly by the laws referring to their kinsmen slaves, but also by special municipal legislation directed against themselves. The nine or ten o'clock curfew, though evaded at times, the provision in Georgetown against assemblages, though not rigidly enforced, the prohibition in Alexandria of separate places of worship, the hardships of registry and of the presentation of satisfactory evidence of freedom, and the limitation of license to engage in business, reflecting the feeling of citizens against migration into the District of free negroes, were some of the evidences of the inequality before the law of negroes with whites, and were drawbacks to the possibility of negroes attaining the semblance of mental or material equality with the dominant race.

The wholesale emancipation of the slaves had not in itself tended to benefit them materially, nor had it been of value to those who had previously been free, for the old restrictions, born of the custom of centuries or of the exigencies of particular occasion, were still in force. The slave had become free, but neither he nor his brother had become a freeman either in the strict sense of the word or before the law.

It was the purpose, though, of the negroes' advocates to correct, as far as possible by law, the remarkable fallacy of American institutions that all men are by nature equal, and in addition to making the slaves free, to make them and their fellows freemen. Senator Wilson had aimed at this in his bill of February, 1862, to abolish the black code. He was ceaseless in his activity, and finally found a shorter route to his desire, in the amendment which very appropri-

ately he had added to the bill of Senator Grimes, providing for education of the negroes, which became a law May 21, 1862, and which provided that all negroes in the District should be amenable to the same laws and ordinances as whites, that they should be tried for any offenses in the same manner as whites, and that upon conviction they should be liable to the same punishment, and all laws inconsistent with the act were repealed. So much was accomplished, in a few words, toward relieving the negro of the inequalities in case of his arrest; but it was only a beginning. As the admission of negro testimony had been varying, it was necessary to define and expand it more thoroughly than had been done in the emancipatory act, which in that particular case permitted the testimony of free or slave negroes; and accordingly, to Mr. Wilson's bill of July 12 was appended Mr. Sumner's motion that "in all judicial proceedings in the District of Columbia there shall be no exclusion of any witness on account of color," the principle which a few years later was extended to the federal courts of the country. The right to serve as jurors was not conferred until the passage of the omnibus bill of rights of March, 1869, which also gave the negroes the right to hold office, a complement to the right of suffrage given them several months previously.

But these were not all the measures urged upon Congress for the particular class who had become in more senses than one the protégés of the government. The tendency to distinguish against them in public conveyances, which has in more recent years found practical application in some quarters in separate cars for negroes, was manifest at that day. But the supports of this tendency were one by one cut away. The Washington and Alexandria Railroad Company, wishing to extend its line into the District, came before Congress for an enlargement of its charter, and this enabled the Senate to amend the bill, which became law, March 3, 1863, so that no distinction against negroes should be made in the cars. In the meantime the far-seeing capi-

talist, recognizing the advantages of obtaining valuable franchises on easy terms, had begun to operate street cars in the city, and the Washington and Georgetown Company, which was chartered in 1862, in deference to prevailing sentiments of the whites and the demands of negroes, had provided separate cars for the latter. This was one of the distinctions which Mr. Sumner would abolish, and he saw his chance for a beginning when the Metropolitan Railroad Company came forward for a charter. This was granted July 1, 1864, but it carried with it a provision that in operating the road there should be no regulation excluding any persons from any car on account of color. This was the wedge upon which he labored for a few more months, and although his efforts were unsuccessful when he first attempted to apply the same rule to the Washington and Georgetown Railroad, he was victorious in his second essay, and when the Metropolitan charter was amended March 3, 1865, it had a rider inserted applying the non-exclusion principle to every other railroad in the District.

The culmination of this legislation was the municipal act of June 10, 1869, which prohibited distinction on account of color in places of public amusement, hotels and similar quasi public resorts, and it must be said that by that time the impression seemed to prevail among the negroes, particularly those who had not been inhabitants of the District for many years, that if any distinction was shown it was against the whites.

There is no doubt that both parties in Congress had their extremists, and on a careful reading of some of the debates one is forced to the conclusion that while, on the one hand, if such a thing had been possible, some would have passed a law changing the color of the skin of the negroes to white, on the other hand would have been found others willing to enact a law that the special advocates of the negroes should change their complexion to black. The negroes may have been unanimous in their desire for such special legislation, but that the leaders were at times mis-

taken in their zeal is apparent from the incident of 1868-69, regarding the public schools trustees, and the debate on the separate street cars showed that even among those who were specially friendly toward the negroes was not always a thorough understanding as to the most expedient course of action. Again, in 1871, the radical efforts for equality found expression in the bill providing that "no distinction on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude shall be made in the admission of pupils to any of the schools under the control of the Board of Education, or in the mode of education or treatment of pupils in such schools." The debate on this bill, which was introduced too late to become of value, as the change in the form of government for the District was about to be made, illustrated the extremes of opinion on the subject, and proceeded far enough to effect the elision of the idea of mixed schools by an amendment substituting for the words "the admission of pupils" the words "in providing the means for the education of pupils."

Since that time the real struggle for equality has been continued. When upon the District were conferred the rights of territorial government, much of the time of Congress had been devoted to legislation affecting the negroes, with the result that according to law they had equal rights with whites at the polls, in the courts, in the street cars, in places of public amusement and entertainment; the provision for the instruction of their young by the government was upon the same basis as that for the white children, and in one institution, the protégé of the Freedman's Bureau, was absolutely no distinction of race, sex or color. This condition of affairs was advantageous for them, but yet contained an element of disadvantage. The theory of the legislation in their behalf may have been perfect. It may have seemed only logical, in accordance with the accepted principle underlying American institutions, to clothe the new element in American life with all the rights and privileges hitherto enjoyed exclusively by the whites. But an appar-

ently logical conclusion may easily be demolished when it is discovered that the premises are wrong. Just as the original idea of immigration to this country, eminently proper at the time, has been perverted to such a degree that the welfare and happiness of great cities, if not of the whole country, are threatened until it is recognized that under existing circumstances the idea has an element of radical wrong in it; so, while the changed conditions of negro life at the capital might justify every act protecting them in their civil rights, the same act twenty-five or thirty years ago may have been most unwise and evil in its tendency.

The safest legislation, the legislation most likely to benefit the greater number in a civilized community, is that which incorporates the sentiments of that community, and not those of persons who reason that because a law works no ill in one section of the country it will be beneficial in every other section no matter how the economic and sociological conditions may differ. A premature law, that is, a law forced upon a people instead of springing from them, may not always be pernicious in its effects, but it is a dangerous experiment. That the equalizing before the law of the negroes with the whites in the District did not result in greater disaster than the outgrowth of the experiment in suffrage, is due not only to the comparatively well disposed nature of the new population in spite of their previous disadvantages, but also to the fact that influence of the weight of government at the capital, with its many ramifications, was a tremendous power against action, had the desire been formulated by any mass of citizens to bring the law into disrepute. At the same time the imposition by Congress of such legislation upon the community against the wishes of the native white portion of it, who knew from experience and long association the character of their negro neighbors, did not inspire them to aid the negroes in their evolution, and served also to harden the distinctions in personal relations which had been drawn as soon as the negroes had ceased to be a comparatively insignificant element in the life of the capital.

In the early days at Washington the two races had been nearer each other in various ways than they were in 1860. Their separation before the war cannot be said to have been due primarily to the difference of color or to prejudice arising therefrom, though it may have been hastened thereby. The transfer of the colored people from their quarters in the white churches and Sunday schools to their own edifices was not solely the result of the alarm of the whites after 1831, but was according to a natural tendency of the negroes, just as of any other class in a city, to associate more and more with those who were bound to them by a community of race, social and material interests, when unusual influences do not prevail. The same principle has obtained since the war among the mass of negroes, though seeming contradictions, which may be explained by the presence of a mixed population in the District, have been made at times and exist at present. The failure of a negro to obtain admission to the law department of a white institution has not interfered with his subsequent appointment as a special attorney under the District government. The controversy over his application for admission to the law school was paralleled by that which arose over the pioneer attempt of a negro to become a member of the local typographical union. He, however, was ultimately successful, and his example was followed by others of his race, while to-day the barbers' assembly, in which no line is drawn, has a negro as its executive. It is also stated that when several years ago the white printers upon one of the papers at the capital went on a strike, the members of the colored washerwomen's union did what they could to aid them by practically boycotting in their small way some of the tradesmen who patronized the newspaper.

There is probably less distinction between the races among some bodies of organized labor than in any other of the many relations of life. In the professions the lines seem to be strictly drawn, as a rule, and this may be illustrated by an incident of quite recent date. For some years negroes have

at intervals attempted to become members of the Medical Society of the District. They have been unsuccessful. The latest candidate of prominence was Dr. Forman J. Shadd, a light-complexioned negro, born in the District, a graduate of Howard University, house surgeon at the Freedman's Hospital and lecturer on medical jurisprudence. In the spring of 1891 the members of the Medical Society received the following anonymous message on postal cards:

"Dr. F. J. Shadd, resident physician at the Freedman's Hospital, is a candidate for membership in the Medical Society. The election will occur Wednesday, April 1. Dr. Shadd is well and favorably known as a man and a physician. Indirectly he has furnished much interesting material for the Society. It will be a just and manly act to elect him. His friends are urged to be present."

On some of the postal cards was added in lead pencil the single word "colored," and this in part was the reason for an unusually large attendance of the members at the meeting, which was expected to be stormy, but the full proceedings of which were protected by its secret session. Nineteen persons were presented for membership, and of these eleven were admitted. With one exception the names of all those whose applications were refused were placed on the list below that of Dr. Shadd. Five were graduates of Howard University, and the vote on their application ranged from 16 to 29 in favor of them to 23 to 37 against them. One of the members explained afterward that the failure of the other Howard graduates to enter was due to a feeling that at the next election their votes would be given for Dr. Shadd. Commenting on the result, Dr. Shadd said: "The result is not unexpected. Several years ago two other colored men were voted down by the Society, which is a sort of close corporation. I did think, though, that the question of admission would depend upon a man's merit and attainments, and not upon his color. Yes, I shall keep on applying until I am elected a member. I know nothing about the anonymous postal card." The matter did not

really end there, but came before Congress in April, 1892, when the District Committee of the Senate was instructed to investigate into the truth of the report that the Medical Society discriminated against colored physicians or physicians who had been or might be teachers in Howard University.[1] Dr. Thos. G. Smith, the corresponding secretary of the Society, and Dr. Charles B. Purvis, the physician at the Freedman's Hospital, were heard by a sub-committee. From the report of the committee it is learned that Dr. Smith said frankly "that the color line was drawn tacitly in the Medical Society, and that no colored man can be elected a member. This result was not reached by any formal action in respect to color, but simply resulted from the fact that when the name of a colored man was up the individual members exercised their privilege of voting against him, as they would vote against a white man who might, for any reason, be objectionable to them.

"Dr. Smith said that the Society could not and did not attempt to keep colored men from practising the profession of medicine, but did keep them from the meetings at which papers were read and medical matters discussed in a semi-social manner. The fear was that the presence of colored members would introduce discord in the meetings, and that so many members, especially among the older ones, would withdraw that the Society would be broken up. Objection was also made to both white and colored graduates of the Howard University Medical School, because they attended a school where the fees were lower than at other schools in the District.

"Dr. Purvis testified that some twenty years ago he and Dr. Augusta applied for membership in the Medical Society. There was a favorable report by the censors on their applications, but the vote against them was overwhelming. Since then Dr. Cook and Dr. Francis, both colored graduates of the Medical School of Michigan University, had been re-

[1] Senate Report No. 1050, 52nd Congress, 1st Session.

jected by the Society, as also had Dr. Shadd, a reputable colored physician.

"Inside the Society, Dr. Purvis continued, there is an association, or committee, to regulate the ethics of the profession. No colored man can belong to this association. The Medical Society licenses the colored physician, but refuses to allow him to become a member of the licensing body. As for the question of Howard University fees, said Dr. Purvis, that school was not chartered for the use of colored pupils, and the majority of the first class were whites, the fees being the same as those in other schools. As the number of colored students increased the fees were reduced, and the other schools have also reduced their fees.

"Dr. Reyburn, Dr. Lamb, and Dr. Joseph Tabor Johnson were members of the Society before they became Howard professors. After they went into the faculty they had to withdraw from it. Subsequently Drs. Reyburn and Johnson left Howard and identified themselves with the medical department of Georgetown University, and again became members of the Society. Within a year Drs. Graham and Hood, however, have been admitted to the Society notwithstanding their connection with Howard University, but Dr. Perry, a member of the Howard faculty, has been rejected.

"Dr. Purvis claimed that the leading physicians in Washington favor Howard, but that the younger men are averse to the institution. He himself consults with Drs. Lincoln, Ford Thompson, and others of equal standing; and the leading medical society of Baltimore admits colored graduates of Howard University."

The committee on June 22 found these facts, and in submitting their report made this comment only: "Your committee are fully satisfied, from the testimony of both sides to the controversy, that the Medical Society of the District of Columbia does not admit to membership colored physicians, however reputable or well qualified they may be, and that as regards teachers in the medical school of

Howard University it appears that in some cases they are admitted and in others rejected."

This episode is recalled to illustrate the point to which a broad interpretation of equal civil rights may be carried, and to direct attention to the tendency to confuse equality of civil rights with that of social rights. It may be said, broadly speaking, that the letter of the law passed before 1870 is observed. At different times during the past twenty years or more well-known negroes have been accommodated in the hotels of Washington without causing a stampede of white guests; the street car lines and steam railroads in the District offer equal accommodations to all, and if there is disorder on the late cars, particularly on Saturday nights, it is not so much due to the color of the occupants as to bad whiskey, which makes no discrimination in its effects on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

In July, 1833, Joseph Jefferson, father of the present Rip Van Winkle, was joint lessee with a Mr. Mackenzie of the Washington Theater, and together they addressed an appeal to the city fathers asking relief from a great burden that oppressed them most heavily. The appeal stated: "There is at present a law in force which authorizes the constables of the city to arrest the colored people if on the street after nine o'clock without a pass. A great proportion of our audience consists of persons of this caste, and they are consequently deterred from giving us that support that they would otherwise do."[1] The lessees estimated that the law meant a loss of $10 nightly, and as they paid a tax of $6 a night they asked for some modification of it. While it is hardly likely that any of the managers of Washington theaters would send a similar petition to the District officials should another early retiring law for the negroes be enforced at this day, the proportion of the negroes in the city able to pay for theater privileges is not such as to lead to any desire on the part of managers to evade the law

[1] Special Report, Department of Education, 1871, p. 316.

flagrantly. Indeed, in one theater, where the performances are such as to appeal most strongly to that element known as the gallery gods, it is not unusual for the black gods to be in the great majority.

In the courts there is no distinction; negroes serve on juries in civil as well as in criminal cases, the counsel for the defense in a murder trial pays the same tribute to the intelligence and integrity of the negro juror as he pays to the inherent qualities of the white ones, and the acquitted man shakes the hands of all twelve of them with equal gratitude and cordiality. If a negro attorney is at times rebuked by the judge it is not on account of his color but because of his choler.

Office-holding by negroes cannot be considered wholly as a local question, but what has been conceded to them at Washington is of interest in connection with the question of equality. This must also be viewed in a comparative light. The population of the United States by the census of 1890 was 62,622,250, of whom 30,554,370 were females, and 7,470,040 are of African descent. The total number of employés of the government at Washington is 23,144, of whom 6105 are females, and between 2500 and 3000 negroes, and these figures show that the percentage of negroes of the country holding office in Washington does not differ materially from the percentage of whites on the same basis. Taking the Interior Department, the branch of the government employing the greatest number of persons in Washington, as a fair example of the whole system as far as the general government is concerned, it is found that of a total of 6120 employés in 1891 the negroes numbered 337, while in the departments of the District government of a total of not more than 3000 employés in the summer of 1892 1431 were negroes. In the general government the negro employés ranged from Recorder of the District, which has been given to one of their race under Democratic and Republican administrations since the appointment of Douglass, through clerks, school-teachers and other vocations to charwomen

and janitors; and in the Interior Department, where the estimate was made, the list included 74 clerks, 38 copyists, 1 typewriter, 2 transcribers, 12 computers, 1 assistant examiner, 53 messengers, 11 skilled laborers, 74 laborers, 5 firemen, 1 janitor, 15 watchmen, 5 packers, 1 painter, 3 receivers, 2 attendants, and 34 charwomen, and of the total number of negroes thus employed 103 were citizens of the District when appointed. Though the greater portion of these employés come under the head of unskilled labor, these figures indicate that the negro has been equitably treated in the distribution of offices, unless the contention be raised that they should have been appointed solely because they were negroes.[1]

Because of the confusion of civil or public rights with those of a personal or private nature, certain elements of the

[1] In August, 1892, the disposition of the negroes employed under the District Government was as follows: 1 assistant assessor, 5 clerks, 1 food inspector, 1 superintendent of public schools, 283 teachers, 1 custodian of books, 9 police privates, 5 members of the fire department, 15 messengers, 981 laborers, 18 drivers, 72 janitors, 2 assistant superintendents and 7 foremen of street and alley cleaning, 2 cooks, 3 nurses, 18 owners of horses and carts, 5 miscellaneous. The most lucrative position in the District held by a negro has probably been that of Recorder of Deeds. This has recently been changed from a fee office to a salaried one. Statistics published recently by a negro who had collected them, show, in addition to those already given, 5 negroes employed at the Executive Mansion, 53 by the Superintendent of Public Grounds and Buildings, 4 United States consuls, 5 messengers and 7 laborers in the State Department, 3 collectors of customs, 331 other employés of the Treasury Department, including 1 auditor and 1 chief of division; 354 in the Interior Department, 173 in the War Department, 41 in the Navy Department, 8 in the Department of Justice, 70 in the Postoffice Department, 37 in the Agricultural Department, 29 by the Smithsonian Institution, 204 by the Public Printer, 67 at the Capitol, including 1 librarian; 19 in the office of Recorder of Deeds and 68 in the Washington City postoffice. The employment of negroes in the higher positions, such as ministers to Liberia and Haiti, just as in the lower ones, is rather a gauge of the political influence of the race than anything else, except where appointments have been made to the classified service.

negro population place themselves in a position which is not commended by those of either race, who are really well-wishers for the progress of the negroes and who recognize that there are certain relations of life which cannot be regulated by law, even should a law to regulate them be passed in that lack of wisdom which has sometimes entered into a consideration of the relative status of the two races. At times the feeling that the law does not meet the demands of their race has led some of the negroes of the capital to set forth their grievances in public meetings or in interviews, which are reported in the daily papers with or without comment. This feeling cannot be thoroughly appreciated by any one save the individual possessed by it, for, as one of the negro thinkers has pointed out, neither critics nor champions of the negro have been entirely "acquainted with the life they wished to delineate, and through sheer ignorance ofttimes, as well as from design, have not been able to 'put themselves in his place.'"[1] The nearest approach the student may have to this place is to listen to those who speak from that standpoint.

Upon several occasions opportunity to do this has been given, and the grievances of the negroes have been filed by them as well as answered by them. In December, 1891, a special meeting was held to effect some organization to obliterate color prejudices. One speaker said that if a colored person was arrested by a policeman he was treated entirely differently from a white person; he was clubbed by a policeman without any justification; that the great difference in the vital statistics among the colored and the whites was due to the fact that the colored people were forced to live in unhealthy houses in alleys, for which a higher percentage of rent was charged than for the palaces of the rich, and it was known that no respectable colored person could rent a house on certain streets on account of the combinations against them of real estate agents and owners. Another

[1] Mrs. Annie J. Cooper in a speech delivered April 5, 1892.

declared that the purpose of the organization was to carry on an agitation and cooperation in patronizing those professional and business men and those stores where their race was recognized in the employment of clerks and salesmen. A third speaker pointed out that it mattered not how skilled the colored doctor might be, on account of prejudice he could not enter the bedchambers of the white people as the white doctor could enter those of the colored people. He had, however, discovered an establishment in the city where a colored salesman was employed by the white proprietor, and he would not advise his hearers to give their trade exclusively to places run by colored people, though he thought one of the best things they could do was to encourage colored people who undertook business enterprises of their own when they found such men responsible and reliable. This speech led to that of another man, who reasoned that if the colored people had a few more stores of their own they would be in a better position. White people, he thought, were ahead of them in the matter of employing colored people in order to get colored trade, and he concluded with the statement that the people of the colored race who have money never had anything to do with these meetings; he wanted the colored men who had money to try the colored people, and thought it was time not only to ask the white man to take in the negro, but also to ask the negro to take himself in, and they should show to the world that they believed what they preached by practising it. Just before adjournment the last speaker, who thought the whole plan out of joint, argued that if they were to interfere with the white man who discriminated against them they should do the same thing by the black man who acted in the same manner.

The proceedings of this meeting did not, of course, meet with the approval even of all present, much less of the community of negroes at large, and at a subsequent meeting, from the incoherency of purpose displayed, were derived certain statements as illustrative of the sentiments of those

assembled. One individual contended that the affair had been started to give some one a chance to gouge money out of the trusting; another said that he saw more prejudices among colored people of the District than between whites and blacks; another, that a business man must invest his money where it would bring the best returns, and colored capitalists did not propose to have the rabble who could not earn money dictate how they should spend it; while another knew black business men who had made their money off their own race and then invested the proceeds in a gilded palace for white people.

Shortly after these meetings, which failed of accomplishing anything, as might have been expected from the proceedings themselves, another mass meeting was called to protest against the killing of a young negro by a policeman, and to emphasize the feeling among a certain class of negroes that the police were extra harsh in their treatment of offenders of their race. The excitement ran high for several days, but the policeman was ultimately acquitted in the Criminal Court of the murder of the negro. The feeling was not eradicated, though, and found expression again a few months later in an attack upon the superintendent of police upon the ground that he was biased and prejudiced against the negroes. He had, however, suspended the policeman until his acquittal, and then restored him to the force, and these facts were brought out again in the controversy at the time, which was punctured quite cleverly by a negro lawyer, who wrote:

"But the question recurs that this is a Republican administration and that a good Republican ought to have the office of chief of police. To this I would say in behalf of the colored people that this is true as a general statement, but that in this particular case Maj. Moore represents that large and controlling element of white citizens to whom the colored people look for employment and whose sympathy and help the colored people need and want. They want it in the way of a public sentiment that will encourage higher grades of employment, the establishment of training schools

for old and young, friendly advice as to conduct at home and abroad, the repression of the liquor traffic, the encouragement of those who are doing the best they can, the visiting of the sick, the furnishing of work for the idle. In view of these considerations and of his established fitness for the place, leave Maj. Moore where he is and encourage him to go forward and fill to the utmost the opportunities for good of his position and of his class."

When it is borne in mind that the indignation meeting was held but a short time before the meeting of the Republican Convention in the District, and that the revival of the agitation occurred in the waning days of a national campaign, the wisdom of the lawyer's observation is apparent. There is reason to believe, though, that a negro prisoner is treated at times with undue harshness, but this is not because of a desire to discriminate against the race by those at the head of the police department, but rather to the stupidity or lack of self-control on the part of an officer, not sufficient, though, to counteract his general value as a preserver of the peace. For instance, not long ago a respectable-looking colored boy was arrested on Sunday for carrying a shotgun along the street. The Assistant District Attorney refused to make out a charge against him of carrying concealed weapons, but the policeman who had arrested him secured a fine against him in another division of the police court under an old law for carrying a gun "with the apparent intention of hunting on the Sabbath." It should be remembered, though, before passing from this topic, that there are sections in Washington where a policeman carries his life in his hands, and the utmost severity is necessary to enforce respect for his office and his uniform on the part of the criminal classes, of which the negroes are an unequal proportion, constituting one-third of the population and contributing more than one-half to the number of arrests.[1]

[1] *The Washington Post*, Dec. 1, 9, 22, 25, 1891. *The Evening Star*, Nov. 29, 30, Dec. 1, 9, 22, 1891, Aug., 1892. *Washington Post*, Mar. 12, 15, 16, 17, 20, 1891.

In the spring of 1891, Congress having failed to appropriate sufficient money to meet the expenses of the National Guard of the District, Gen. Albert Ordway, commanding, issued, on March 9, an order that the four companies of negro militia, forming two battalions, be mustered out. Not many years before that a similar failure on the part of Congress had resulted in companies being cut off, and the second episode brought out not only the protests of the militia affected by the order and their friends, but also the politicians, who saw at once another instance of the color line, and for several days the controversy raged. A protest of negro citizens was presented to the President, to whom Gen. Ordway had explained that the matter was a financial one, and that so far from having any feeling in the matter he would himself make as large a contribution toward maintaining a colored battalion which would include the four companies, as any other individual, and he would, if necessary, pledge the rental of the armory for a year. The conference with the President resulted in a change from the plan of disbanding the companies to one of consolidating them, which had, indeed, been contemplated previously, and another example was given of the equitable treatment of the negroes, supported by public sentiment. The two opinions on the subject may be had in the words of the commanding general, and of one of the committee which conferred with him. The former said: "I am glad the difficulty has been arranged and that the colored companies can still be kept in the National Guard. I hope the consolidation will be effected harmoniously, if it is decided on, and that all the necessary public help will be forthcoming. I have not drawn the color line at all in this matter, and the reasons for my action were purely military ones, as will appear to any one who looks into the matter." The latter said: "When the order disbanding the colored militia was issued, the impression made upon the public mind, and in which we shared, was that race and color, and not politics, was the cause of it. In reply to this, Gen. Ordway frankly ad-

mitted that whatever his motives may have been, his order, under the circumstances, was susceptible of that construction." The consolidation took place, and nothing more of friction came to the surface until some indefinite fears were expressed that the participation of the militia of both colors in a Thanksgiving sham battle might result in some unpleasantness, and the injury of one colored soldier was attributed privately to race feeling.

Occasionally the controversy over discrimination takes a grotesque form, as in the case of the embryo bathing beach on the Potomac; and to a complaint that negroes were given a separate place from the whites, the superintendent replied: "I have allotted to the colored folks more area per capita than to the whites, but the whites have not complained . . . it is my aim to make the beach a popular bathing place, and everybody knows that can never be if the two races are forced to mingle. The Creator marked the races with different colors, and I do not ask why; I take them as they are, and with a desire to benefit both I shall not try to obliterate the mark. White folks will not be permitted to occupy the colored premises, nor colored folks the white premises. This seems to me the only practicable solution of the question, and I think the commissioners are sustained both by law and public opinion in maintaining the distinction the same as in the schools." While another correspondent wrote: "The black boy has the same privilege as the white. The beach is the same, as are the dressing-rooms, and I am quite sure both have the same privilege of bathing if they choose, and the white boy is not indignant that he has to bathe alone, for which reason I cannot see why his colored friend should be, they being on exactly the same footing with regard to privileges and restrictions and being held to be upon an equality."

In brief this is a review of the contention of the negroes for equal rights in the District. It is presented in as impartial spirit as possible, and no better commentary on the status of the negro as to civil rights is had than in the

experiences during the recent encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic in Washington. When the enterprising citizens were striving to bring the encampment to that city, certain negroes bestirred themselves against the plan. One of the spokesmen said, in referring to the Grand Army:

"It dare not bring its next encampment to this city, when it is a fact that quite a number of those who signed the call to bring it here make bold to say that in their places of business no negro could or would be accommodated, and two of the signers have made the public statement that they wished no negroes would ever again enter their stores. We shall appeal to the moral sense, the loyal sense of the eminent men of the country, as well as the rank and file, not to encamp here on these grounds, and for other solid reasons, which we will make good by correspondence between now and then and in a public meeting in Detroit the first night of the encampment."

"We have no idea," said another, "of allowing the encampment to be held here, and already a hall has been secured in Detroit in which we shall hold meetings and fight every claim set forth by Washington. There are more than the colored Grand Army men opposed to this thing, and they intend to fight it to the bitter end. If it is not already a political matter, it will be made one before it is over."

The Grand Army came, however, and in its great parade two negroes were on the staff of the chief marshal of the citizens' escort, a collection of negro school children on one stand sang the same songs as the collection of white children on another, the same public provision was made for the comfort of the negro veterans as for the white ones, and in spite of the fact that the occasion presented unprecedented opportunities for the politician, but one case of alleged violation of civil rights was made. A negro of New York charged against the proprietor of a first-class restaurant that his color had prevented his being served in the establishment. The proprietor testified that his orders had

been to serve all Grand Army men, white or black, the floor-walker gave his version of the incident, and in three minutes the jury gave a verdict of not guilty.[1]

It must not be inferred from this summary of the question that in such places as first-class saloons, restaurants, hotels or other public resorts the negro customer would be as welcome a visitor as the white one, however equal the money of the two races might be in other places of bargain and sale; but this latent spirit of discrimination would be found to exist in a proprietor no matter what his color, provided the great mass of his customers were white. This is but an outcropping of that feeling, recognized by the sober-minded of both races, that however equitably the civil rights of the negroes may be observed, the line is drawn when the question of equal social privileges is raised; but even in that case where personal preferences govern, as in the case of public resorts, where the law offers protection, the sensible negro perceives the wisdom of remaining where his company is desired instead of attempting to force himself upon those who prefer the association of the whites alone.

The public schools are an illustration of the feeling that on social lines the line must be defined between the two races, and the willingness that in public education the negroes shall enjoy privileges similar to those of the whites, while what might be a great lever toward the attainment of social equality is to be avoided, but emphasizes the feeling which finds expression in church relations and the intercourse of the private home. Whether the negroes were originally forced from the white churches, whether they willingly retired, or whether there was a medium between these extremes, it is doubtful whether the great majority of the negroes would avail themselves of the full privileges of the white churches should such be offered them, for it is noteworthy that the negro followers of two faiths, the Catholic and the Congregationalist, which seem to draw no

[1] *Washington Post*, July 5, '91, Sept. 29, '92.

color line in their sanctuaries, have since the war and their enjoyment of equality under the law, organized separate congregations of their own; and it is also interesting to note that in the only Catholic church erected for the negroes particularly, whites and negroes are found worshiping together under the ministrations of white priests who are served by negro acolytes. In some of the white churches of other faiths a few negroes are numbered among the congregation, but they occupy the back seats or the gallery, as they have been accustomed to do since long before the war and emancipation; and the advent of a negro in responsible official station in the body of a church near the pew of the President of the United States creates as much unfavorable comment from some of the whites as that aroused among some of the negroes when one of their number preferred to attend a white Congregationalist church instead of lending his influence to a congregation of his own color. The only Presbyterian church in the District for negroes had its origin before the war, while the only Lutheran congregation of negroes and the Episcopal congregation of negroes, with a negro rector, and the Episcopal missions for them in charge of white clergymen, are growths of the post-bellum period; but the reason for the comparative scarcity of negro congregations of these faiths is not due to a slackening of the line of demarcation, but rather to a failure of their methods of worship to attract the negro.

It was the opposition to social equality, too, which resulted in the organization of the Colored Young Men's Christian Association. In the preliminary meetings, while one element attacked the white organization on the ground that as it claimed to be a Christian association it should admit to its membership any Christian, no matter what his color, another explained that while those upon whom the existing association depended for its support objected to the admission of negroes, it would second any efforts of the new body for the welfare of the negroes. In another nonsectarian organization, the Woman's Christian Temperance

Union, a different spirit prevails. Some of its members are negroes, and they have rendered efficient service among the members of their race. They participate in the meetings of the Union, and at its receptions are on an equality with everybody else present. Another organization of a somewhat philanthropic character, Wimodaughsis, the name being formed of the first two or three letters of the words wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, had not been in operation a year before the color question was raised, with the result of the resignation of the secretary, who considered herself the founder. The trouble was precipitated by the entrance into the classes of the institution of a negro woman, a teacher in the public schools. The resigning secretary gave her views as follows:

"The idea of the Wimodaughsis is not only that of a business corporation, but it is a social organization. We have pleasant rooms here where members can come in evenings and read and amuse themselves. Every Thursday evening we have social entertainments and once or twice refreshments. It was by presenting this social feature that I was able to bring so many of my friends, a large number of them being Southern ladies, to subscribe for stock in the organization. You can see that if negroes were admitted the social features would be destroyed. At the Thursday evening entertainments gentlemen are admitted. If colored women were allowed to be members, why there is nothing to prevent them bringing colored men to the entertainments. I feel that I have been treated outrageously, and in this belief I am sustained by not only the Southern lady stockholders, but by the ladies further North who are not woman-suffragists. The trouble all lies with the woman-suffragists, who, to be true to their doctrine of equality, must advocate the admission of negroes."

The position of the majority of the board of directors, who favored the admission of negro women to the privileges of the Wimodaughsis, was that it was a business corporation, and as there was nothing in the charter limiting

the membership to any class or race, any woman who subscribed for stock was entitled to the privileges of the club, and any one who paid her tuition must be given that for which she had paid; that it was an incorporated body to which the provisions of the civil rights amendment applied just as strictly as to any other public institution. They denied that it was a social organization, but claimed that it was a club for the education of women. The result of the controversy was in favor of the element which the ex-secretary considered as representative of woman-suffragists; and the organization continued its work, and at subsequent events of distinctively social character, negroes were present and moved about as freely as anybody else.

Aside from such organizations and those of a political complexion, the color line in society is drawn almost as distinctly in Washington as in Richmond or Baltimore. Even in the posts of the Union veteran associations it has been found expedient to separate the races, though in the general organizations of men and the auxiliary of the women no such distinction is raised, and at their public meetings have been a liberal proportion of negro men and women. Perhaps a negro official or ex-official may be present at a White House function, and thus supply material for inflaming at a later date personal animosity against a presidential candidate; perhaps in an organization of citizens intended for the general welfare the negroes may have representation; of twelve hundred and eighty-nine marriages in a year, of which 341 are among colored people, there may be cases of miscegenation, as was the case in 1891, with similar acts in previous years;[1] perhaps a former mayor of Washington may entertain at his home negroes at a reception in honor of the Methodist Ecumenical Conference, to which negroes were delegates; perhaps two or three negroes may be present at a reception by the citizens of Washington

[1] Of three such cases in 1889 there were two white grooms and negro brides and one negro groom and white bride.

to the Grand Army of the Republic, or by some public character at other times;—but such incidents among the thousands of events in the composite and conglomerate society found at the nation's capital do not demonstrate that there is any real lessening of social restrictions. The complaint about these distinctions is not always directed against the whites, for the negroes feel that they have social limitations among their own race. Speaking generally, the white woman who marries a negro must find her chief social pleasures among his associates, if he does not lose by such a marriage some of their respect and sympathy; and the organization of a Colored Young Men's Christian Association, instead of being a protest against caste, as one negro styled it, may be a half-conscious testimony to race pride. One of the leaders of the negroes, who has frequently made the capital the pulpit for his utterances to the country, had this to say about the Ecumenical Conference:

"Nothing has done more to drive away the prejudice that exists against the colored race than this conference of educated Christian gentlemen. This was evidenced by what I saw a few days ago in the elegant residence of ex-Mayor Emery, of this city. Among the elegantly dressed people in that house I saw the colored people moving freely about, not crouching as if they had no right to be there. The blackest of them moved about as though they had always been used to it. It was an illustration of the universal brotherhood of man and that human equality which could not be brought about anywhere as it has been at this conference.

"Our American brethren fought a little shy of us, but our English, Scotch, and Canadian brothers took us by the hand as if they could never let go. We have often heard the doctrine of human equality preached, but in this case we had it exemplified. I felt proud of the dignity, the decorum, the gentlemanly bearing displayed by our brethren in connection with this new revelation of American society. The great demon that must be cast out of the American mind is

prejudice, the assumption of inferiority on account of the black man's color. This demon of prejudice has never been more authoritatively ordered to come out of Washington than by this conference. The example will not be lost. If after these English brethren have gone the Americans attempt any proscription, we will inform on them at the next conference."

Though what he termed "the demon of prejudice" has failed to obey such orders, his remarks are an example of one view held by some negroes at the capital, which has been expressed in another way in the statement that "the colored race in fifty years will have sufficiently advanced in intelligence to break down a majority of the barriers now existing between them and the white people." The other view, which it is believed is held by the majority of the negroes who have given serious thought to the subject, is that of a member of a political organization in which a discussion of the color line was had. As for social equality, he said he did not want it. All he wanted—all any sensible colored man wanted—was equal rights under the law. He did not believe in social equality. There might be members of the association whom he would object to have visiting his wife and family. Each man must be a judge of such things. No colored man of sense would ask for social equality. This was but a blunt way of giving vent to the sentiment which was expressed in a meeting of a literary society.

"The matter of social equality," said the speaker, "will be, and ought to be, left to individual preferences. Although we have been accused of it, we are not contending for this sort of recognition from our white friends, because we recognize the right of the party doing the entertaining and paying the bills to select the guests, and because we find among ourselves all of the purely social that we have any need for. We do not practise unrestricted equality among ourselves and ought not to. We invite whom we desire; they accept or refuse, as they desire. There never will be any friction between the races on this score. We under-

stand and practise the same customs, distinctions and preferences which white people follow. This is not what we are contending for. We are not objecting because we are excluded from the social whirl. It is by a dexterous juggling with this idea of association with colored people in a purely social sense, an idea so repugnant to white people generally as just explained, that some persons unfriendly to us endeavor to raise the dust of color prejudice so thick that our white friends who are disposed to accord us justice cannot see their way clear to do it. We can take care of ourselves in a purely social way. But when their prejudices make them set up invidious distinctions and discriminations in public licensed dining halls, hotels and places of amusement, make them want to exclude us from the avenues of remunerative employments, the commercial world, and make them deny to the most cultured and aspiring among us admission to their best professional schools, schools of art, their professional, scientific and literary associations, we think it a hardship which we, as loyal American citizens, ought not to be compelled to endure."

The exceptions to the general rule regarding personal equality only define the rule more sharply, and no more prove or indicate a change of sentiment than did the ride of Charles Sumner and Henry W. Longfellow in a car set apart for negroes back in the sixties show that the great mass of the white population of the District favored a removal of those cars.

V.

AN EXPERIMENT IN SUFFRAGE.

Had the legislation in behalf of the negroes in the District stopped short at provision for their education and civil rights under the law, and had those provisions been fulfilled in a conservative seconding of the radical spirit which dictated them, one chapter of life at the national capital would have remained unwritten, and the District of Columbia would probably not present now, in a government ostensibly of the people, by the people and for the people, the appearance of a political eunuch. Though later events may have demonstrated that the extension of the suffrage to the negroes was unwise at the time, and disastrous in its effects in after-years, a careful study of the events following the passage of what is known as the bill of rights for the District, with the manoeuvres preceding it, is not only instructive when compared with movements in other sections of the country, but furnishes food for careful consideration by those who, from a sentimental or practical standpoint, would devise some form of local self-government for the seat of the national government.

The dream of the participation of negroes in the politics of the District, which was enunciated as early as 1849, seemed at that time the veriest figment. Eighteen years later the dream became a reality, with effects which were immediate, pronounced and, in a measure, permanent.

Following the various acts in the negroes' behalf in the early years of the war, the agitation for granting them the full privileges of citizenship had reached such a stage in 1865 that a special election was held, in December of that year, in Washington and Georgetown to determine the will of the white voters on the subject. The poll was a large one, and showed that the voters were almost unanimously opposed

to the scheme, the results being, for negro suffrage, Washington, 35 voters, Georgetown, 1; against negro suffrage, Washington, 6556 voters, Georgetown, 813. This sentiment as voiced at the polls was emphasized a few days later in a letter by Mayor Richard Wallach, of Washington, who had been mayor of that city since August, 1861, during all the exciting days of the war, and whose position in public and private life justified his judgment of the prevailing wishes of the voters of his community. He wrote, under date of January 6, 1866: "No others in addition to this minority of thirty-five are to be found in the community who favor the extension of the right of suffrage to the class and in the manner proposed, excepting those who have already memorialized the Senate in its favor and who, with but little association, less sympathy and no community of interests or affinity with the citizens of Washington, receive here from the general government temporary employment and having at the national capital residence limited only to the presidential term and invariably exercising the elective franchise elsewhere." Mayor Wallach's position was one of argument, but to argument was added threats, one newspaper of that time boldly insinuating about the negroes that, "should they go to the polls to deposit their ballots, the probabilities are that they would not all return to their homes."

But Congress, and especially those members of the Senate who had become the special advocates of the negroes, had before them the petition of "twenty-five hundred colored citizens of the District"; they had, in a sense, come to regard that special legislation for the District as inaugurating the policy which was to be pursued toward the rest of the country, and, in the face of the opposition of the representatives at the polls of the white population, in spite of the fact that in nine States distinctively loyal and represented in the Congress, namely, California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, the right of suffrage was limited to white males, and in others there

being a property or educational qualification, the Senate set about conferring the franchise upon all men in the District who had resided in it a year, "without distinction of race or color."

The debate, however, was on, and it was continued for several months, marked by all the bitterness of opposition on the one hand, and the pugnacity of views on the other, which had characterized similar discussions since the negro question had become congressional property. Quotations from Scripture, appeals to physiology were of no avail. The wise amendment offered by Senator Dixon, of Connecticut, providing for a qualification of intelligence, was lost, as was also that of Senator Cowan, of Pennsylvania, to strike out the word "male" from the act, though this proposition, which was at first considered a joke, precipitated a prolonged debate, which will all be repeated in all likelihood before the enfranchisement of women. On December 13, 1866, the bill was passed by the Senate, and on the next day the House acted favorably upon it. It had, however, not yet become effective and received a temporary check when it was returned, on January 5, 1867, with the veto of President Johnson. His message on the subject was a lengthy one, but after he had reviewed the special election of 1865, he went to the heart of the matter in these words, in referring to the new voters who would be created should the bill become a statute:

"Possessing these advantages but a limited time, the greater number, perhaps, having entered the District of Columbia during the later years of the war, or since its termination, one may well pause to enquire whether after so brief a probation they are, as a class, capable of an intelligent exercise of the right of suffrage and qualified to discharge the duties of official position. * * * Clothed with the elective franchise, their numbers, already largely in excess of the demand for labor, would soon be increased by an influx from the adjoining States. Drawn from fields where employment is abundant, they would in vain seek it here, and so add

to the embarrassment already experienced from the large class of idle persons congregated in the District. Hardly yet capable of forming correct judgments upon the important questions that often make the issues of a political contest, they could readily be made subservient to the purposes of designing persons * * * It is within their power to come into the District in such numbers as to have the supreme control of the white race and to govern them by their own officers, and by the exercise of all the municipal authority, among the rest, of the power of taxation over property in which they have no interest."[1]

Congress was not to be restrained by such reasoning, but, on January 8, passed the bill over the veto, and the right of franchise was conferred upon the representatives of more than 30,000 persons, the majority of whom were but five or six years removed from the life on a plantation. This was less than seven months after the fourteenth amendment had been proposed and more than eighteen months before it became a part of the Constitution by ratification. It was nearly two years before the fifteenth amendment was proposed, but it was soon followed by the civil rights bill of the District. This provided that the word "white" wherever it occurred in the laws relating to the District of Columbia, or in the charter or ordinances of the cities of Washington or Georgetown, and operated as a limitation on the right of any elector of the District to hold any office, or to be selected and to serve as a juror, was to be repealed. Passed in July, 1867, and again in December of that year, it failed to become a law through President Johnson's not signing it, but on March 18, 1869, it received the signature of President Grant, and the sweeping legislation for the political benefit of the negroes reached its culmination.

Effects of this were instantaneous almost, and in April, 1869, Congress was asked to change the form of government. The agitation to this end was continued during the terms of

[1] Veto Messages, 1792–1886, p. 324.

service of Mayors Sayles J. Bowen and M. G. Emery. On the floor of Congress the new class of full-fledged citizens were reckoned among the elements contributing to make the government of the capital "the worst government in the United States," and, indeed, one speaker stated as his opinion that "now the truth is that there are reasons why a municipal government for this District, elected by universal suffrage, should be a worse government for the District than the municipal government of other cities, if that be possible." It was a curious form of government, to say the least, and when, in spite of objections of municipal authorities, and a "reform" movement, it was changed by act approved February 21, 1871, to a territorial form, it was thought that the people and Congress would have some measure of relief. Escaping from Scylla, however, the District seemed to have dashed against Charybdis, for within less than a year after the inauguration of the territorial government, which included a governor, a council and a board of public works appointed by the President, a House of Delegates, and a delegate to Congress elected by the people, an investigation of its affairs was demanded of Congress and granted. A special committee sat for ninety days, beginning January 22, 1872, and devoted their time to a study of documents and the hearing of testimony regarding the conduct of elections and the managing of the finances of the corporation, notably the $4,000,000 loan which by an election held in November, 1871, had been authorized for the use of the board of public works.

The investigation was useful not only in illustrating the character of elections under universal male suffrage, but also in indicating what would be the result of the system under the peculiar conditions prevailing in the District. Witnesses told of the absence from the polls of tickets against the loan, of negroes marching to the polls or camping in their vicinity for hours, and of some reputable citizens remaining away from the polls entirely. One witness, for instance, said:

"On the Republican side we would have our meetings in each precinct the evening prior to election, and in some instances we would go to the polls in bodies and sleep there till morning, to await the opening of the polls, because it would sometimes take a man two hours before he could get at the window to deposit his vote."[1] One body of men, who were then organized, included 7 whites out of 86 voters, and it is really not surprising to read the statement of the memorialists praying for an investigation, that "the minority, appalled by the perception that five voters who had nothing might surely be counted on to tax the property of the sixth," made no efforts at the polls.

In November, 1867, the number of voters in the District were 13,294 white, 6648 negro; in April, 1871, of the 28,502 votes registered, 26,306 were cast at the election of a delegate to Congress; in November of the same year, of the 28,529 voters registered, 17,757 were white and 10,772 negro. The vote in that month, on the $4,000,000 loan, was 14,760 for and 1213 against, while, at the same time, 17,750 votes were cast for the District house of delegates.[2] As there is nothing in evidence to show that the negroes were backward in exercising their new rights, it is fair to presume that there was much truth in the words of the memorialists. The testimony of one witness is so enlightening that it should be read in this connection. Rev. J. W. Green, a negro divine, was before the committee, and this was the dialogue:

"State your name, residence and occupation."

"J. W. Green; I reside in Washington; am a minister of the Gospel."

"Were you present at a meeting on the 12th of October, 1871, in the seventeenth district, held at Island Hall?"

"I was."

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[1] Investigation into the Affairs of the District, 1872, p. 274.

[2] Investigation, etc., 1872, pp. 442–443, 493. Cf. Investigation, etc., 1874, p. viii.

"Where Colonel Perry Carson was chairman and Joseph Williams was elected secretary pro tem.?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Is that a truthful report of what occurred at that meeting?" (Question objected to.)

"State what occurred at that meeting."

"I was present at that meeting called by F. A. Boswell, the chairman of the Republican club of that district. Mr. Boswell left after calling the meeting, and went to Massachusetts. The meeting went on, and Perry Carson was a vice-president and called the meeting to order. Mr. Williams was elected secretary pro tem. Carson stated the object of the meeting, when Williams got up and stated the call for the meeting, and then said that he himself advocated the four million dollar loan, or words to that amount; and that he was sorry it was not ten million instead of four. The report in the paper (the Citizen) is substantially correct."

Objection being made to the witness stating what he himself said, as he was not connected with the government, so much of the proceedings of the meeting were then read as included what Mr. Williams said, as follows:

"Joseph Williams arose and said that he only hoped it was for $10,000,000 instead of $4,000,000, for the laborers would at least get the drippings. If the loan was defeated, the laborers would be thrown out of employment and their families would suffer. Some people alleged against him that he was a contractor. He thanked God that he had brains enough to be a contractor, and that he was not dependent on office for his support. All he wished was contracts, and he would fill them rightly. He expected to transmit his brains to his children and all the children around him. He had brains enough for the whole seventeenth district. * * * He always paid his laborers, and if he made money in his contracts, he did it on the square, and he defied any one to catch him tripping * * * Whoever, said he, shall vote against the loan must take the consequences. He was interested in the loan, and if any man voted against it and came to him for work, he would tell him go starve."

This suggestive extract having been read, the examination of Green was continued. He was asked:

"Do you know whether the colored men were intimidated at the polls?"

"I do not know," he replied, "whether they were directly at the polls, but they were before they went there."

"By whom?"

"By threats made in public speeches, in like manner to this one read."

"By contractors or men in the city government?"

"I cannot say, but I think so."

"Do you know whether any member of the District government made any such threats?"

"I would not say but I think I could be prepared to answer that question."

"Were voters brought up to the polls in bodies?"

"No, Sir, they came up two abreast."

"Did they go up in considerable numbers at one time, under leaders?"

"There were attempts made several times, but the police prevented it."

"Was there any arrangement made beforehand that they should vote in a certain way?"

"I do not know."

"Did they have leaders to supply them with tickets?"

"The tickets were placed in the hands of various persons, who dealt them out on the morning of the election. I was chairman, and dealt out tickets and saw that they were distributed properly."

"Were the tickets for and against the loan of different colors?"

"I did not interfere with that election at all. I think four were placed in my hands. I voted for the delegate and kept the other three. I don't know how voters were brought up at the last election. I was speaking of the common custom. I didn't bother my head with the last election; I simply voted and passed along. I don't recollect about the color of tickets."

"At the elections here, are the colored men in the habit of voting for men upon their own preferences and judgment?"

"Many are not; they depend upon others more than the white voters generally, because they are uneducated. Men of my own color will deceive their color as well as white men. White men can deceive them better, because they are educated."

"Who edited the paper when Mr. Williams' speech was reported?"

"I do not recollect. I heard the speech, and so far as read it is substantially correct."

"Did you oppose the loan?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Did you make speeches against it?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Did you vote at all on it yourself?"

"No, Sir."

"Do you know any one who was influenced, either by money or intimidation, to vote for the loan?"

"I do not, personally."

"Do you know of the use of any money?"

"No, Sir."

"Was money offered to you?"

"No, Sir. I informed them that no man must offer me money."

"You have been a leader among your people on election days?"

"I have always taken an interest among our people, to instruct them, as they are uneducated, and tried to see that no advantage was taken of them."

"When you spoke of distributing votes, you did not allude to the last election?"

"No, Sir. I have opposed some of the men of my own color, and have been abused by them because I expressed my sentiments against certain men. There seemed to be more interest in the last election, generally, than usual."

"More in the loan than in electing a delegate to Congress?"

"I suppose some did; the loan brought in a different class; some interested for money, and some for politics."

"Do you know of money being used in either elections?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Was any treating done at the other elections?"

"Considerable."

"Have you been in the employ of Mr. Albert Grant?"

"No, Sir."

"Did you vote on the loan on either side?"

"No, Sir. I think there were tickets at the polls against the loan in the morning."

"For whom did you vote for delegate?"

"Mr. Boswell. I did not know whether he was in favor of the loan or not."

"How long before the last election was the meeting at which Mr. Williams made the speech which has been referred to?"

"The election was on the 21st of November; the meeting was on the 12th of October."

"What proportion of the people of your district are laboring men?"

"A large portion of them; mostly colored men. Many of them have been in the habit of laboring on the streets."

"Do you know whether colored men were imported from Maryland or Virginia, outside?"

"Yes, Sir; men were brought in from Maryland, who worked on Seventh Street, inside of the boundary; and men were brought from Alexandria to work on the canal."

"Did they vote?"

"I do not know rightly whether they did or not."

"Were many brought in?"

"There were on Seventh Street. I saw fifteen out of eighteen that were brought from Alexandria."

"Were they brought here to work or vote, or both?"

"I do not know; but I know they were residents of Alexandria."

"Did you have any conversation with any of them about voting?"

"No, Sir."

"Did you see any of them vote at the polls?"

"No, Sir. It was before election."

"Have you any knowledge of intoxicating liquors being dealt out at polling places?"

"I did not see it; only its effects."

"Do you know that it has been threatened that, if the Democrats were successful, they would restore slavery?"

"I have heard that frequently, and have had to fight it, and tried to instruct them to know better than to believe such a thing."[1]

Comment is almost unnecessary upon this array of statements and inferences, which were a fair exemplification of the position occupied by the negroes in the politics of the time. But the exhibit is the more significant because the elections not only placed men of color in the Legislative Assembly, where they had the ultimate power of taxation, but also because this particular election opened, as it were, the bunghole of the treasury, through which the money of the people flowed in ever-increasing volume, instead of percolating moderately and unvaryingly through the legitimate spigot. It was told in the investigation how some of the funds of the District were used, the telling of this, perhaps, explaining, in part, the comparative unanimity of those able to read among those who appeared at the polls. At that time, when the population of the District did not exceed 135,000, of whom not more than 90,000 were white, fifteen newspapers enjoyed either a substantial or a more or less precarious existence. In the first ten months of its operations, the government felt called upon to distribute among all these papers, for advertising and printing, $101,221.79, and from January 31, 1872, to April 1, 1874, $88,803.53, a total of $190,025.32 in three years; this total not including

[1] Investigation, etc., 1872, pp. 372–374.

the accounts of the fire department and the various school boards. The expenditure in the first ten months, according to the statements of the government, though the minority of the investigating committee estimated it at $143,635.62, was but $11,813.36 less than the total amount spent under the administration of the last two mayors, a period of three years, and that sum, $112,035.15, included the cost of binding the official documents. Granted that the change of government necessitated extra advertising, even the majority of the committee acknowledged that some of it was unnecessary, and within a few weeks after the investigation closed without action against the authorities, the Legislative Assembly, on June 20, passed an act regulating the municipal advertising, by which the expense in that line was somewhat reduced, though William E. Chandler had explained the situation in these words:

"It was difficult to give the advertising to one newspaper without giving it to all, and with that generosity which public officials usually show to the newspaper press, the papers of the District were allowed to print all the government advertising, without any attempts to make sharp bargains with them. Complaints of this character, 'too great expenditure of money for printing and advertising,' are always made against every municipal, State or national administration, and while such expenditures cannot always be justified, the offenses may well be treated as venial and not deserving of severe reprehension."[1]

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[1] Appended to Investigation, etc., 1872, p. 19. On this point the minority report had the following (p. xvii): "The seventh charge is that 'an unparalleled profligacy in advertising has been exhibited in the employment of fifteen newspapers, bearing an ominous resemblance to subsidizing the press of the District.' This charge is fully proven, the amount thus expended reaching the enormous sum of $143,635.62; and the recklessness and profligacy of the District government and board of public works in regard to this charge is fully admitted by the majority. It was attempted on the part of the District government to justify this large expenditure for advertising and printing on the ground that its use brought the

The investigation ended in what was considered a vindication of the municipal administration, though the minority report to Congress voiced the opinion of some, that some change should be made by which greater power over the officers should be enjoyed by the people. But the proposition then advanced, to make all the officers elective, except the governor, would hardly have met the united support of the opposition, as with them it was not so much a question of the people having a voice in the conduct of their affairs, as of some people not having a voice, inasmuch as they were not qualified to exercise their new-gained privileges intelligently.

Results of the first investigation did not cause the opposition to relax their efforts, which culminated in another investigation in 1874. At the first session of the forty-third Congress, several petitions were presented by citizens of the District, asking that a joint select committee should be appointed to examine into the affairs of the District government. The committee was appointed and, after organization, on February 11, and the arrangement of certain preliminaries, commenced taking testimony, on March 5, and continued its sessions for that purpose daily until May 28th.

The committee's task was to inquire whether unlawful contracts had been made for public improvements, the actual cost of the improvements, the amount agreed to be paid for

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newspapers to the support of the loan, and the unity of sentiment of the people as expressed through the press had a material influence on the value of the bonds in the market, and yet we have the sworn statement of every newspaper proprietor in the District that the amount received from advertising and printing had no influence whatever upon their action, which clearly establishes the fact that the large expenditure above named, or the greater portion of it, was utterly thrown away, and was simply taking that sum from the pockets of the tax-payers and giving it to the press; not for the purpose of subsidizing it, for that is sufficiently disproved by the sworn statements of the proprietors themselves, but simply from a high regard entertained by the District government for the newspaper press."

them; whether unlawful assessments and taxes had been levied; whether correct measurements of work had been made; the existing debt on its account, and what, if any, portion of such indebtedness was created on account of Government property and might be paid out of the United States treasury; and to report such amendments to the organic acts as might be necessary to protect further the rights of citizens, or to regulate the handling of moneys.

Governor Shepherd, who had succeeded Governor Cooke as the executive of the District, in answer to the petitioners had submitted a memorial arraigning the other memorialists, reviewing briefly the affairs of government under the territorial system, and, while disclaiming all purpose to evade any reasonable and proper investigation, asking whether, under all the circumstances, it would be fair and just to the people of the country and of the District, and to himself and his associates, to enter upon an inquest without some probable cause shown of the truth of the charges made. He stated that, in addition to the report of the former investigation, "completely vindicating the District authorities," "every charge of unlawful exercise of power by the District authorities now complained of has been presented to the courts of the District, and in every instance the District authorities have been sustained; that at every election, of which there have been several, the people of the District have sustained its officers by large majorities; that notwithstanding attacks through the public press and the utmost efforts of the factionists of the District already alluded to, which for malevolence, unscrupulousness and want of truth have been unparalleled, still your memorialist believes that the officers thus assailed have not forfeited the respect of the public at large or the citizens of the District, but would be fully vindicated before your honorable body if their voices could be heard. Your memorialist denies that the opposition, now demanding a third or fourth investigation, are law-abiding citizens or are seeking the good of the District; but says their whole purpose is either to overthrow the present form of govern-

ment or to cause the removal of officers whose appointment they cannot themselves dictate."[1]

Mr. Shepherd was heard again and at length in the investigation, in which the utmost latitude seems to have been allowed in the examination of witnesses and the admission of testimony, and at its conclusion the report to Congress, made June 16, was signed by all the committee,—Senators William B. Allison, Allen G. Thurman, William M. Stewart, Representatives Jeremiah M. Wilson, Jay A. Hubbell, Lyman K. Bass, Hugh A. Jewett, and Robert Hamilton, who were unanimous in the recommendations to Congress.

The greater part of the examination was devoted to the board of public works, which was claimed by counsel for the defense to be not subordinate to the municipal body corporate, and which it was alleged had levied special assessments under express authority of the legislative assembly and not independently of it. Counsel also contended that the board had not usurped authority, that its construction of the organic act under which it had conducted operations had been sanctioned repeatedly by judgments of the courts, that Congress had from time to time made appropriations for payment of the work, and that the indebtedness of the board of public works was no portion of the indebtedness of the municipality of the District of Columbia.

The investigating committee, after weighing all the evidence, found that while they could join in the general expressions of gratification at the improved condition of the national capital, they were compelled to condemn the methods by which the sudden transformation had been effected. They considered that the board had adopted an erroneous method, vicious in its results, of awarding contracts without open competition, with the attendant increased cost for improvements and the opening of the way to favoritism in letting contracts and of brokerage in the same. They found that in three years the funded indebtedness of

[1] Investigation, etc., 1874, p. 11.

the District had increased from $4,350,189.91 to $9,902,-251.18, and that the total burden upon the property of the District was $20,716,008.07, while the assets represented by all forms of taxation was $6,726,360.04, and the District treasury was practically exhausted in all its departments. As illustrative of the financial methods of the administration, the committee's report may be quoted verbatim as follows:

"The act creating the board limited the total debt of the District of Columbia to 5 per cent. upon the assessed value of property within the District, the intent of which was to limit the actual debt of the District to that sum. The board, however, construed the various provisions of the organic act as placing them and their transactions without the pale of this limitation, endeavoring, at the same time, to keep within the letter of the law, while violating its spirit; and to this end the legislative assembly, from time to time, passed acts which were simply devised for the purpose of raising money with which to pay previously incurred obligations, and continue the improvements by creating temporary obligations upon the property of individuals in the District. Thus we find that after exhausting the $4,000,000 loan, authorized by the act of July 10, 1871, in the improvement of streets and the building of sewers, an act of the legislative assembly was passed authorizing the issuance of $2,000,000 of what were called 'certificates of indebtedness,' the payment of which was secured by a pledge of the assessments upon property adjacent to the improvements. Again, after exhausting this device for the payment of contractors, the legislative assembly, by an act, divided the cities of Washington and Georgetown into sewerage districts, and levied a tax upon the various sewerage districts, varying in rate from 5 to 20 mills upon the square foot, although at the time this act was passed nearly one-half of the entire sewerage system was completed as contemplated by what was known as the comprehensive plan, submitted to the legislature in 1871, as a basis of the $4,000,000 loan, which expressly included a system of sewerage. By this device

$2,120,000 were added to the assets of the board of public works, and were disbursed to contractors, except about the sum of $500,000 thereof. Various other acts were passed of a similar character, involving smaller sums, and by this system of credit upon credit, or rather debt upon debt, the board continued its vast operations, the result of which has been to create a debt for which the board of public works and the District, in one form or another, are liable, and when added to the other floating indebtedness of the District, together with the funded indebtedness, aggregates not less than $18,000,000 instead of $10,000,000, as limited by the act of Congress of May 8, 1872."[1]

With this view of the situation, with the fact before them of an exhausted treasury and a largely expanded debt upon the people of the District, and in spite of the enhancement of the capital as a place of residence and the essential improvements which were attempted in a brief space of time when years should have been occupied for their completion, the committee, without precluding the idea that there should be some form of representative government in the District, recommended the abolition of the executive, the secretary of the District, the legislative assembly, the board of public works, and the office of delegate in Congress, and the appointment of a commission to manage the District affairs until Congress should have time to frame a proper form of government; for the committee had arrived unanimously at the conclusion "that the existing form of government is a failure; that it is too cumbrous and too expensive; that the powers and relations of its several departments are so ill-defined that limitations intended by Congress to apply to the whole government are construed to limit but one of its departments; that it is wanting in sufficient safeguard against maladministration and the creation of indebtedness; that the system of taxation it allows opens a door to great inequality and injustice, and is wholly insufficient to secure

[1] Investigation, etc., 1874, pp. xii, viii, xiii, xxviii.

the prompt collection of taxes; and that no remedy short of its abolition and the substitution of a simpler, more restricted and economical government will suffice."[1]

Four days after the presentation of the committee's report its recommendation was adopted in an act of Congress ending the short life of the territorial government, and appointing a commission of three persons to administer affairs. At the same time provision was made under which the present form of government by three commissioners was established July 1, 1878.

An experiment had been tried in negro suffrage and it had failed, and failed in such a manner as to tinge with prophecy the words of Johnson in his veto message. Men fresh from the plantation, where they had had absolutely no schooling in the duties of citizenship, men without any interest of associations or property in the welfare of the District beyond the fact that they expected to make a living there, had been at one stroke clothed with powers equal not only to those of their race who in spite of "the black code" had by urban life been placed far in advance of the field hand, but also to those of the white race, who, having enjoyed for centuries all the elevating gifts which usually are evolved from education and wealth, were best qualified to realize what would most conduce to the welfare of the community. This latter class, it may be argued, had not always displayed the wisdom which they should have possessed, but this may be explained to some extent. There are gradations among the whites just as there are among the negroes, and there are few municipal governments in which the element, which naturally should be expected to lead in public affairs, are moved to do little beside holding mass meetings before elections and indignation meetings afterward, in the meantime neglecting the most important work of elections,—organizing the voters and seeing that all the votes are cast. But the white people of Washington,

[1] Investigation, etc., 1874, pp. viii, xv, xxviii, xxix.

even had they been united politically or had community of interests, had done little in seventy-odd years to raise Washington much beyond the grade of a village, and the municipal governments were far from perfection.

Just as in the case of the negroes, there were three distinct classes of whites in the community,—the conservative element of education, wealth or refinement, the employes of the government, and a mixed aggregation of the elements which had made the Snow riot in 1835 and other overt acts against the negroes a possibility, the flotsam and jetsam of the armies, the hangers-on to politicians, and the adventurers of various sorts which had for years infested the capital. The extremes of the white race were as far removed from each other in affinity as was the white race from the negroes in color. Even before the extension of the suffrage the whites were divided politically, and afterward they did not unite their forces on public questions or at the polls as did most negroes. The reputable part of the community, even had they been of one mind about the suffrage, were powerless in the face of the determination of ruling spirits in Congress to push the special legislation for the negro to its utmost; and while it may be an easy matter now to point out that this or that should have been done, it is easy to understand with what despair the opposition saw the horde of ignorance turned loose upon the polls. It was a shock to their inherited and developed ideas to see the negroes acting as policemen and firemen or occupying positions in the local government, the legitimate fruits of a suffrage at a time when the theory that to the victors belong the spoils had unlimited sway. But it was not that which appalled them. Their great fear was based upon the fact that the negroes holding the balance of power, if not actually controlling affairs, were the real arbiters of the expenses of government and of the taxation of which they bore but a slight part, and they dreaded the results of such a rule, and this fear was not unreasonable when the situation is explained. For instance, in 1870 Washington, in a group of

the first twenty cities of the country, occupied the twelfth place in population. Of this the negroes constituted 32.46 per cent.,—the largest among the twenty cities, New Orleans being next, with 26.35 per cent. At the same time, of 37.71 per cent. of persons engaged in all classes of occupation in Washington, 23.90 per cent., the largest percentage in the twenty cities, were engaged in callings which cannot be said to add directly to the wealth of a city; while the percentage of those engaged in agriculture, manufactures and trade was much below that of the other cities. The preponderance of the non-productive elements was due to the incoming of the negroes, largely, though the presence of officeholders had not a little to do with it. At the same time, out of a population of 38,726 negroes in Washington and Georgetown, it was estimated there were 23,843 above 10 years old who could not write and a large proportion of them unable to read.

But the views of the whites regarding the suffrage were not harmonious by any means. While such a man as George W. Riggs was willing to say, "I think that the majority of voters here are incapable of self-government," and would have a government by a commission, another such as Walter S. Cox, favoring bodies elected by taxpayers, asserted that he did not intend to discriminate against colored voters, and added, "I should be for allowing all to vote who were obliged to share in the burdens of government. I know," continued he, "a great many colored people in Georgetown who are as competent to vote as the white people of the same class." He considered them generally orderly and industrious, although he had no doubt that a great many of those who had recently arrived in the District from the surrounding counties were too ignorant to be properly qualified to vote. "If I had my way," he said, "I would make both property and intelligence qualifications for all voters."[1]

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[1] Investigation, etc., 1872, pp. 692, 701.

Though these opinions varied as to the remedy for the existing evils, they practically coincided as to the influences which demanded a change, and their echoes are heard whenever the agitation for local self-government finds utterance in the halls of national legislation. As recently as the winter of 1890 the Senate, while discussing a resolution referring to the Commissioners of the District, was given a review of the question of negro suffrage by some of those who had done so much to bring local government to an end by their recommendations, and by others whose memories reached back to that time.[1] The text of the review was given by Mr. Ingalls, who said: "The experiment of popular suffrage was tried here for a number of years, the experiment of a representative local government was tried here, and after many years of experience it was deliberately abolished by the concurrence, and I think the unanimous concurrence, of both houses of Congress acting in their constitutional capacity as the rulers of this District, and with the approbation of all the people of the District except those men who wanted to be in local office. . . The subject was considered from alpha to omega, and the investigation resulted in the unanimous conclusion that under the conditions which existed here it was wise that Congress should resume the function it had abdicated."

Mr. Stewart, of similar mind, alluding to the right of suffrage for which Mr. Blair had pleaded, said that he had seen it at the capital, "when it was in the hands of the people, and they were called upon to elect a vast number of officers, and they made worse mistakes here than elsewhere. Perhaps the condition was peculiar at the time. There had been a large addition to the voters of people unaccustomed to exercise the right of franchise, but they showed the same incapacity here that they do everywhere to select the large number required of them."

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[1] Congressional Record, Dec. 1890, pp. 171–77.

Mr. Morgan then undertook to review the matter, and phrased his opinion thus: "That local government became corrupt and abominable and disgraceful, an eyesore, a rebuke, a disastrous commentary upon civil government. It was called the 'feather-duster legislature,' and it had about it so many ludicrous phases, and it was so the subject of general reprobation and ridicule, that it could not be tolerated any longer. It was abolished by an act of Congress, and the pendulum swung to the other extremity." He asked Mr. Allison what was the leading circumstance that caused this entire change, and the Senator from Iowa, who had been a member of the second investigating committee, in reply said that there had been a great many circumstances, though he thought the chief thing was that there was an enormous debt of the District and of the cities of Washington and Georgetown. He did not know precisely what the Senator from Alabama had in his mind in asking for the chief motive on the part of the investigating committee for changing the government, but he added that "it was absolutely necessary to destroy every existing government here in order to have a settlement of the situation at that time." This action was characterized by Mr. Morgan as similar to the method of stamping out disease among cattle by slaughtering every animal which should be in any way likely to be affected.

"To burn down the barn to get rid of the rats," interjected Mr. Ingalls.

"Yes," retorted Mr. Morgan; "to burn down the barn to get rid of the rats, and that is what was done in this case, the rats being the negro population and the barn being the government of the District of Columbia, 'the feather-duster legislature.'"

"That is the Senator's inference and not mine," was Ingalls's comment.

"It was so palpable," said Mr. Morgan, "that the Senator from Kansas had expressed what was in the mind of the Senator from Iowa that I could not refrain from applying

the allusion of the Senator from Kansas to the Senator from Iowa."

Continuing, he contended that there had been no occasion for depriving every white man in the District of his right to vote, but that all the bad material in the electoral power should have been extirpated, and he added some statements which seem largely borne out not only by the facts elicited in 1872 but by the traditions still current in Washington. "Now, the historical fact," he said, "is simply this, that the negroes came into this District from Virginia and Maryland and from other places; I know dozens of them here now who flocked in from Alabama in that period of time. The invitation being a very urgent one to them, they came in here and they took possession of a certain part of the political power of this District; that is to say, they did not take possession of it, for they were incapable of doing that; but their masters and owners, the owners of their consciences, having stronger bonds upon them than their masters had ever had upon their persons while they were in slavery, took them and put them as a factor, a political power and agency, into the administration of the affairs of the District of Columbia, and there was but one way to get out, so Congress thought, so this able committee thought, and that was to deny the right of suffrage entirely to every human being in the District and have every office here controlled by appointment instead of by election. Thereupon in the face of this influx of negro population from the surrounding States, the Senate and the House of Representatives, in order to preserve property rights and the decency of administration in the central government of the United States here around the very footwalls of the Capitol, found it necessary to disfranchise every man in the District of Columbia, no matter what his reputation or character might have been or his holdings in property, in order thereby to get rid of this load of negro suffrage that was flooded in upon them. That is the true statement. History cannot be reversed. No man can misunderstand it."

The blame for the condition of affairs reflected in this debate cannot be placed entirely upon the negroes. It is not surprising that they should have thronged to the polls at the first opportunity to do so. They had been a political question ever since the compromise of 1787, and during the conditions resulting logically from that compromise they had been induced to regard the government as their particular patron and the party in power as their savior. When that party, after a debate which could not have failed to arouse their deepest interest even as it percolated to them through hearsay, placed the ballot in their hands, it was the most natural thing in the world for them to seek to exercise their newly-acquired privileges; and as the act of Congress tended to increase the antagonism to them of those who from a political standpoint would have been wise in obtaining control of the new voters, if that had been possible, it was not strange that the new citizens, particularly those who were latest from the plantation and most deeply submerged in the consequent ignorance, should have become the dupes and tools of those among the whites or of their own race who in all modern politics thrive upon the lack of intelligence of their followers, or should have come under the malign influence of the adventurers who thronged to the capital towards the close of the war and in the following years.

There were, indeed, in political affiliation with this combination of greed and ignorance, men who, because of the historic position which their party had assumed, felt obliged from policy or principle to place themselves in line with the newly enfranchised; but however reputable they may have been they could do little had they desired to stem the current which was carrying the local government to ruin.

At the same time no one is now inclined to doubt that much of the grandeur and beauty of the national capital is the outcome of the activity of the board of public works, which was made effective by the votes of this very element in which there was so much danger. The first investigation

had revealed the causes of the condition of the District exposed to the second, which the committee considered "chargeable to the attempt early made by the authorities placed over it to inaugurate a comprehensive and costly system of improvements to be completed in a brief space of time, which ought to have required for its completion several years."[1] One line in every report of the Commissioners of the District is a reminder of the times between 1867 and 1874, and in spite of the exhibit made eighteen years afterward in the symmetry and beauty which appear on the surface at Washington, it is difficult for the unprejudiced mind to reach any conclusion but that the experiment, which ended in the loss of suffrage for all, was untimely, and that its expense may be best measured in the financial condition of the government at the capital when it ceased to be a territory.

[1] Investigation, etc., 1874, p. viii.

VI.

A GENERATION AFTERWARD.

Under ordinary circumstances twenty-five or thirty years form a very narrow period in the life of any race upon which to base a criterion of it. A generation after the battle of Hastings, after the French Revolution, or after the events of 1776 in this country, would contribute but little to the total of the advancement of the races which were affected respectively by such changes. Since the war, though, the history of this country has been one of wonderful progress in many directions, as well as of retrogression in others, for the white race, and the same may be said of the negro race. At the capital the conditions of the two races have been as similar as the strong arm of the national government could make them, and there consequently is presented an excellent field for forming an estimate of the negro's achievements or failures. This may be done only by comparison, remembrance being had at the same time that the preparation of slavery for the struggle of negroes on equal lines with whites represents but a small fraction of the centuries through which Anglo-Saxon civilization has reached its present stage, and also that the advantages and opportunities suddenly conferred upon the negroes were those, which were the natural heritage of white Americans and which had been of gradual growth, preparation keeping pace with attainment.

In modern times, when among civilized races physical force has become of secondary consideration, the weapons of evolution are wealth, education, and suffrage. The last has been eliminated from the question in the District, the opportunities for education by the State are equal for both races, and the government lends its aid to such an institution as Howard University for the higher education of the negroes. Because the capital city has assumed the character

of a place for residence rather than for any other purpose beyond the phases of departmental and congressional life, there have been but few means there for acquiring wealth legitimately except in the execution of contracts until the territorial government ended, in the ownership of real estate or in the various lines of retail trade. The aggregate wealth of the negroes, therefore, represents in large measure the enhancement in the value of their real estate and the improvements upon it. In 1861, of the $54,000,000 assessed valuation, about $650,000 represented property of negroes, and their churches were worth $75,000. Of the $153,307,541 assessed valuation in 1890, they owned at the least $8,000,000 as far as may be estimated, and one of their churches alone is valued at much more than the whole wealth of that kind thirty years ago.

Owners of real estate range from the humble workman who cannot read or write, who holds his property by gift or purchase in days before the war or immediately subsequent to it, to the capitalist who is in a position to employ a white agent to attend to his property. The complaint that agents have combined to prevent negroes, on account of their color, from renting dwellings in certain localities must have been based, if entirely true, upon action in recent years, if one may judge by the results of a stroll in nearly any section of the capital. For police purposes the District is divided into nine precincts, and the figures of the last census show that in five of these the proportion of negroes to whites is beyond that of the whole number in the District to the entire population. The exceptions are in the first and sixth precincts and in the seventh, which include the oldest portion of Washington and Georgetown, and in the ninth, which comprises much of the recently developed section of Capitol Hill, or the northeastern part of the city. That of the 30,000 population in 317 alleys the majority are negroes is explained by their poverty. There may be a combination, but it is not because dealers in property do not regard the negro's money as good as the white's. The

desire to own a home, as shown as early as 1867, when one-fifth of the owners of real estate in the city were negroes, is a mark of the stability of purpose of some of the race, and its maintenance is a monument of thrift and industry most marked perhaps among the elements representing the old ante-bellum slaves and free negroes, but by no means confined to them.

The experience with the Freedman's Bank, remembered in sorrow by many a negro, may perhaps be the reason why the negroes have preferred to do business with established banking houses of the whites, and make some provision for their families by joining the Odd Fellows, organized before the war, or the many beneficial societies which their race has produced. Undeterred, though, by this apparent disadvantage, a number of negroes organized in October, 1888, a savings bank with an authorized capital stock of $50,000, of which $32,000 have been paid up. During the first year $117,000 were deposited in this bank, and in 1892 the deposits amounted to more than $317,276. In a statement recently issued the fact was announced "that the bank has steadily grown in popular favor and public confidence is evidenced by the class of men who have lately become its patrons, and by the fact that different charitable and social organizations as well as business enterprises are making this bank their place of deposit." Private bankers also do business. Though at least one establishment controlled by white men has employed a negro as a salesman, there is a tendency among some of the negroes to branch out into lines of trade for themselves, and they would doubtless be successful if they could secure the hearty cooperation of their own race. The lack of this may be found to be the fault of both parties to the undertaking. They have, however, engaged in many other lines of business beside running barber shops or cobbling, and among them may be found dry goods merchants, contractors, grocerymen, real estate men, and dealers in the market, the last including the comfortable-looking proprietor of a stall within the market building and

the vendor of herbs and garden "sass" on the outside, an excellent type of the survival of the suburban negro of thirty years ago. Recently some of them have started a house-cleaning bureau, and they announce that this bureau "has selected with great care and pains an efficient corps of able-bodied workmen, and is prepared to make monthly or yearly contracts to clean new and old houses, wash windows, take up and put down carpets, scrub floors, wash paints, or do any other work required about a house. Special arrangements will be made for sweeping and dusting office rooms in public buildings, and for furnishing boys to run errands, either by the hour, day, or week."

Not a few of the race have increased their means by careful investment, some by money earned by them and saved with prudence, by inherited property or by a due appreciation of the friendly aid extended them became possessors of hotel properties, which are used by the whites, and one of these, which was long famous as a first-class hostelry, particularly for people of wealth and refinement, was the result of the life work of a man who started most modestly and whose later reputation as a caterer is still remembered by some of the older inhabitants.

This accumulation of wealth in some sort or another has resulted in a class of negroes competent to enjoy many of the refinements and comforts which have made the respectable middle class of whites in this country the conservative element in the community, and the mimetic powers of the negroes have made the gradations in their society similar to those of the whites, though complexities are added by a survival of the feelings generated in slavery and by the influx from all parts of the country of educated negroes who have obtained employment in the several departments of the general government. They have their clubs, from the fashionable resort fitted with the usual conveniences of such resorts, where great men of the race, including Pete Jackson or a foreign minister, are specially entertained, to the obscure places devoted to gambling; and though the Bethel

Literary Society, now in its twelfth year, is not only an influential power, socially and educationally, the beneficial societies or similar organizations appeal strongly to the great majority of the negroes. The social extremes are wide apart and present sharp contrasts. At one time a church may be thronged with a dignified congregation, displaying gowns of the most approved fashion, the work, perhaps, of negro seamstresses, some of whom are among the best in the city, to witness the marriage of a daughter of a man who has made his money by shrewdness and enterprise, to a member of the younger generation who has had to depend upon brain and perseverance to make his mark. The bridal costume is a real gown, the diamonds are real, and the number of the carriages as they carry the guests to the reception is as distinctively matrimonial as if their occupants were whites. Let a perambulatory piano strike up a lively air in any part of the town almost, and it is soon setting the pace for two or three or more negro girls of fourteen years or younger, who tickle the fancy of passers-by or the crowd which collects by their gyrations, their flings and shuffles, which would put a Lottie Collins to the blush. Let a band of music, good, bad or indifferent, sound its notes on any highway, and immediately it is surrounded by a mass of half-grown men and women, frequently in rags, their heads and bodies swaying in time with every note, particularly of the bass drum or of the trombone, which seems to appeal peculiarly to their hearts, slipping, sliding, executing impromptu waltzes, laughing and shouting. They appear so suddenly that they may be said to spring almost from the asphalt, and it is a debatable point whether the community would suffer should one of the musicians become a Pied Piper and lead the throng into the bowels of the earth, never to appear again.

It is unfortunate for the negro that outside of the professions about the only vocations paying salaries or wages in Washington open to anybody are those of clerks, salesmen, officeholders, laborers or servants of one kind or

another. The practical exclusion of negroes from the first two classes is due to a preference of white people for whites, as well as to the presence of a number of white men and women sufficient to meet the demand for such services, and the willingness of a former mayor of Washington to hold a subordinate position in a department or of an ex-clerk in the treasury to be a street-car conductor is a manifestation of the ups and downs of political life in Washington, which hedge out the negro from other lines of competition and livelihood. The development of industrial training in the public schools, while theoretically an excellent idea, practically seems to lose its value partly if the pupils intend to become artisans and mechanics, at the same time remaining in the District; for there is a limit to their employment just as there is a limit to the number of negro doctors, lawyers, teachers, officeholders, and ministers who may find profitable employment. Washington is not a manufacturing city in the strict sense of the term, though there has been an increase of industries in the past ten or twelve years. The census of 1890 deals with 115 of them, employing 23,477 hands in 2300 establishments and paying $14,638,790 wages. The important industries were brick and tile-making, carriage and wagon factories, flour and grist mills, foundry and machine shops, lumber mills, employing a total of 2393 hands; lithographing and engraving, printing and publishing, with 3724 hands; bottling establishments, malt liquor breweries, 328 hands; and confectioneries, 349 hands. The situation of negro men in this respect, lamentable as it may be, is even better than that of the women. The principal of the Normal School at one time expressed the belief that the young girls of her race were peculiarly situated in that "they have no avenue open to them in this city by which a livelihood can be obtained outside of the school-room and menial positions"; and it is interesting to compare that statement, which has a tone of regret about it, with that of Arabella Jones, in 1852, who realized that in that age females were naturally destined to become mothers

or household servants, and that for either position some education was necessary. But the question arises whether an education which carries pupils to a point where their legitimately acquired ambition has but limited means of gratification is not only harmful for the individuals, but a possible source of danger to the community. May it not also be the case that, as so frequently happens with others, the negro has mistaken the means of education for education itself, and thought that the training of the memory would develop the faculties of judgment and reason?

The secular education offered by the public school is after all preparatory for real culture, which must be had by the intercourse of everyday life in the family, in associates, in trade or business, and in the church relations. In the District their churches have been the centers in which many of the movements of the negroes have been formulated, and from their pulpits have frequently been sent the battle-cry for the race whether in the District or for the country at large, and there, too, have their quasi-leaders uttered the sentiments designed for use in the national political arena. Their churches have also been the places for a cultivation of their social instincts, and although in recent years some of the race have built a hall especially for their meetings, the mass still abide by their historic rendezvous. The simple structures, about a dozen in number in 1861, have increased in pretentiousness and number nearly ninety, ranging from the small building in a neighborhood inhabited by the lowliest of the race, to the more costly ones in modern style and of substantial architecture in the vicinity of the fashionable residence sections of the city. Some of the pastors are men of marked ability as preachers, and their congregations are large and enthusiastic. The negroes appear to cherish the forms of religion which appeal to their heart and emotions rather than those which require more exercise of the mind,—excepting the Catholic, on the one hand, and the Congregationalist on the other; and though the bush meeting is losing its hold upon the more cultivated of the city

folks, it still has an attraction for those in city or country who have not drifted from the traditions of slavery. The statistics of some of the churches well illustrate this condition. The Baptist body has 13 white churches and 42 negro ones, the Methodists of all stripes 23 white and 36 negro, the Episcopalians 24 white and 3 negro, the Presbyterians 18 white and 1 negro, the Lutherans 12 white and 1 negro. The remarkable contradiction in the situation of the Catholic body, which has but one negro church, and of the Congregationalists, whose churches are about equally divided between the two races, has been mentioned previously. The efforts of earnest workers among the negroes to reach those who may be of influence hereafter has resulted in the organization of a Young Men's Christian Association and the occupation of a building in a once notorious locality, the character of which has been materially changed by the personal endeavor of the pastor of a Congregationalist church; within a few weeks a young negro, devoted to missionary work among his people, has spent much of his time in the establishment of a home for the unfortunate negro women for whom no other provision of the kind exists in the District; and these movements, like that of negro women connected with the Woman's Christian Temperance Association, are evidence that the highly flavored rhetoric of the pulpit and the exultation of the pews associated with many of the churches of twenty years or more ago are giving place to the more practical expressions of religion, which may be increased by the non-sectarian union of the preachers who hold their meetings in the hall of their Young Men's Christian Association.[1]

The newspaper, generally regarded as a great educational factor, has not attained a great growth as an undertaking by negroes. This has been due not always to lack of capabilities on the part of the editors, or to the tendency to

[1] The Protestant Episcopal Church, in its preparatory school for negro clergymen at King Hall, seems to be nearing a solution of the church question as far as that body is concerned.

indulge in personalities and political debates not of an edifying character. The newspaper readers of the race have generally preferred to confine their support to the papers published by the whites because more is given for their money; their own publishers have thereby missed so much of that support or part of it, and it is not surprising that two weekly publications represent at present the secular press of the negroes at the capital.

To their religion, to the refining influences of wealth and education, and to the example of the more favored of the race, the negroes have been obliged to look for guidance and assistance in the development of their morality.

Early in the years of their emancipation Congress took steps to remedy whatever defects in the bases of morality among the negroes had been bequeathed by the extinct system. The act of July 25, 1866, provided that all negroes in the District who, previous to the act of April, 1862, had agreed to occupy the relation of husband and wife, and who were living together as such, or recognizing the relation as still existing, whether the rites of marriage had been celebrated between them, should be regarded as husband and wife and should be entitled to all the rights and privileges and subject to all the duties and obligations of the relation just as if they had been married according to law. All their children, whether born before or after the passage of the act, were to be deemed legitimate were the parents still living together. If the mother had died or the parents had ceased to live together for any other cause, all children of the woman recognized by the man as his should be legitimate. This provision may have been efficacious in settling relations for the forming of which abundant opportunity had been presented in the swarming of the new population from the fields, but was really no deterrent for those who followed in poverty and ignorance their natural instincts, careless in their thought for the morrow, and living in a style which was of a character to dull the sense of personal purity even among individuals of a more advanced type.

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Their poverty and accessions to them of ignorance from near-by regions have been a great incubus upon the negroes as a whole. It is estimated that in 1867, of 32,000 negroes in the District one-half were destitute, and the removal of contraband families five years before from the camps in the city to a point across the river was the origin of a negro orphan asylum,—nearly fifty children being left with no parents to claim them. It was part of the task of the Freedman's Bureau to relieve this distress, and on March 16, 1867, Congress appropriated in one lump $15,000 for the relief of the freedmen in the District or of destitute negroes under direction of the Bureau. There was at the same time considerable destitution among a class of whites, and it was even charged that some of the funds designed for the negroes had gone in this direction. Their destitution has not been remedied to any great extent, and of the 16,000 persons in the District now who are believed to be without visible means of support the great majority are negroes. The extent of pauperism is shown in the number of negroes who eke out a livelihood from their pickings on the dumps, and by such a picture as was presented in April, 1891, when in one room of a one-story shanty were found one day a dead infant, and five grown persons and six children suffering from the influenza which prevailed at that time. The police have probably the best machinery in the District for unearthing poverty and misery and for aiding in applying relief, but though the cases of sickness and destitution reported by them as sent to the hospitals show that the whites have been in a majority in recent years—1891, for instance, furnishing 1440 white cases and 1132 negro ones—the report of the health office reports show another phase of the question, the physicians to the poor in the same year treating 4641 whites and 8597 negroes, and of the total of 17,048 surgical and medical cases receiving aid from the seven dispensaries receiving District aid 12,033 being negroes. The total number of cases treated by the physicians to the poor between 1883 and 1891 was 45,410 whites and 93,970 negroes.

While the death rate for both races has decreased in the past sixteen years, the larger rate of the two has been and is among the negroes,—in 1891 it being 32.68 for the negroes and 18.27 for the whites. The death rate among the negroes is largely increased by infant mortality, and this the health officer attributed in 1889 to a great extent to the location of negroes in the alleys and unhealthy parts of the city, and this was due to their poverty, which, however, is not such as makes them willing to go to the almshouse, apparently, as in 1890 of the 273 inmates received but 98 were negroes, and in 1891 of 182 inmates 81 were negroes. Various means have been adopted to meet this emergency of poverty, one of the latest being the National Association for Destitute Colored Women and Children. The hospitals which admit both races render efficient service, a good idea of this being given by the report of the Freedmen's Hospital, which deals with charity cases, and to which were admitted in 1892, of a total of 2539 patients, 1970 negroes.

It is not surprising that the conditions born of poverty have contributed largely to the development of immorality and crime in spite of the influences of church life, but when the statistics in these fields are examined other causes must explain the figures, startling in some respects.[1] In thirteen years the number of legitimate white births has increased from 2068 in 1879 to 2440 in 1891, and the illegitimates from 49 to 73; while the number of legitimate negro births has decreased from 1400 in 1879 to 1371 in 1891, and the number of illegitimates has increased from 299 to 460 in the same years. The respective populations have increased in about the same proportion, the negroes remaining about one-third of the total. The per cent. of illegitimacy to total births has decreased from 12.5 to 12.3, the per cent. of illegitimacy to total illegitimacy by color has decreased for the

[1] The following tables, derived from the Report of the Health Officer of Washington, will prove interesting for the student of this phase of the question, some of the figures of population being approximate:

Year.	Births.	Still-births.	By Color and Legitimacy.							
			White.				Negro.			
			Births.		Still-births.		Births.		Still-births.	
			Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.
1879	3,816	395	2,068	49	112	18	1,400	299	171	94
1880	4,095	358	2,241	56	105	14	1,456	342	159	80
1881	3,595	370	1,961	53	125	16	1,274	307	143	86
1882	3,391	351	1,747	53	124	16	1,277	314	146	65
1883	3,116	362	1,631	53	136	18	1,132	300	139	69
1884	3,224	351	1,684	63	123	9	1,196	281	141	78
1885	3,334	391	1,805	56	154	25	1,136	337	127	85
1886	3,516	406	1,916	65	149	15	1,184	351	138	104
1887	3,728	406	2,022	70	127	22	1,288	348	146	111
1888	3,670	458	1,964	71	156	26	1,262	373	155	121
1889	4,001	443	2,098	78	137	20	1,397	428	163	123
1890	4,070	474	2,171	75	172	11	1,341	483	181	110
1891	4,344	440	2,440	73	154	18	1,371	460	157	111

Percentages may be studied in this table:

Year.	Population.		Per cent of illegitimacy to total births.	Per cent of illegitimacy to total births, by color.		Per cent of illegitimacy to total illegitimacy, by color.		Per cent of white illegitimates to white births, and negro illegitimates to negro births.	
	White.	Negro.		White.	Negro.	White.	Negro.	White.	Negro.
1879	115,247	57,130	12.5	1.31	7.83	14.0	86.0	2.32	17.60
1880	118,236	59,402	12.0	1.38	8.35	14.0	86.0	2.43	19.02
1881	121,300	61,760	12.9	1.47	8.54	14.8	85.2	2.63	19.42
1882	124,441	64,212	12.3	1.60	9.26	14.4	85.6	2.09	19.73
1883	126,300	65,680	14.1	1.74	9.63	15.0	85.0	3.14	20.95
1884	130,700	69,300	13.4	2.00	8.70	18.3	81.7	3.60	19.02
1885	132,700	69,300	15.0	1.68	10.18	14.3	85.7	3.00	22.88
1886	136,000	69,300	15.2	1.85	9.98	15.6	84.4	3.28	22.86
1887	140,000	70,000	14.8	1.83	9.33	16.7	83.3	3.34	21.27
1888	145,635	72,522	16.1	1.93	10.16	16.0	84.0	3.49	22.18
1889	149,000	74,000	12.7	1.95	10.70	15.4	84.6	3.59	23.45
1890	154,352	75,600	13.7	1.84	11.90	13.4	86.6	3.34	26.50
1891	170,000	80,000	12.3	1.68	10.70	13.7	86.3	2.90	25.12

whites and increased for the negroes, while the per cent. of white illegitimates to white births has increased from 2.32 in 1879 to 2.90 in 1891, the highest per cent. in that period having been 3.59 in 1889, and the per cent. of negro illegitimates to negro births has increased from 17.60 in 1879 to 25.12 in 1891, the last figure having been exceeded most in 1890, when the per cent. was 26.50. Of course, the statistics of illegitimacy do not include all cases, as the finding of 98 dead infants in 1888, 71 in 1889, 69 in 1890, 75 in 1891, and 97 in 1892, and the reports of abandoned infants prove. These amounted in 1888 to 5 negro and 1 white, in 1889 to 8 negro and 2 white, in 1890 to 3 negro, in 1891 to 1 white and 3 negro, and in 1892 to 19 negro and 1 white. This condition of affairs is attributed to the practical absence of any penalty for seduction or adultery beyond that relating to girls under 16 years of age, and of provision compelling the father to support his illegitimate child, and the abandonment of infants to die or fall into the hands of the police has been traced to servant girls who were unable to keep their children with them while at work, and the cases of still-birth are said to have been due to heavy lifting and overwork, particularly among negro women.

The general statements about immorality may be applied to those relating to crime.[1] In 1877 the negroes furnished

[1] The statistics of crime for fifteen years may be studied in the following table:

Year.	Population.		Arrests.	
	White.	Negro.	White.	Negro.
1877	109,505	52,870	7,523	5,460
1879	115,247	57,130	8,485	4,125
1880	118,236	59,402	7,914	3,644
1885	136,271	67,388	13,189	10,036
1887	140,000	70,000	10,819	9,156
1888	145,635	72,522	10,572	9,958
1889	149,000	74,000	10,719	10,431
1890	154,352	75,600	11,764	12,608
1891	170,000	80,000	11,546	13,620
1892	173,610	84,821	12,415	14,251

42 per cent. of the whole number of arrests, and in 1892 they furnished 53 per cent., and while between those years the negro population has increased 62 per cent., the number of their arrests has increased 161 per cent., the proportion of the negro population to the white remaining relatively the same. More minute study of the statistics of the occupations of those arrested shows that those which are monopolized by the negroes furnish the largest number,—the arrests in 1877 being 3905 laborers and 788 servants, and in 1892 being 9068 laborers and 1856 servants, while those having no occupation were 270 in 1877 and 1021 in 1892. Commenting on this in 1890, the superintendent of police said that "the meanest of all crimes, petty pilferings and thefts, constitute the most frequent annoyance to the citizen, housewife, hotel-keeper and stranger here. Dishonest servants are in a great measure responsible. The sneak, of whom there are so many, belongs to that class of loafers who play 'crap' and hang about low-down groggeries and resorts during the day and steal under cover of darkness." Of the greater criminal cases, while the whites have furnished the greater proportion of arrests for forgery, embezzlement, and false pretense, the negroes are in the majority of those arrested for crimes of violence. Nine whites were charged with murder in 1888 and 10 negroes, in 1889 5 whites and 14 negroes, in 1890 12 whites and 7 negroes, in 1891 1 white and 6 negroes, and 1892 showed a marked exception, 12 arrests on this charge being of whites and 5 of negroes. The negroes in the workhouse preponderate. For this disproportion of negro arrests the superintendent of police, in his report for 1891, believes the neglected state of the negro child and youth is responsible to a great extent. "This is evidenced," he says, "by the fact that out of 228 cases where petit larceny was charged, 192 were against colored children under 16 years of age, and out of 330 charges for the same alleged commissions, 260 of the accused were between 18 and 21 years of age. On the other hand, while the colored youth take to theft,

the white youth takes to drink. Out of 12 cases of intoxication where the persons were under 16 years of age, 7 were white and 5 colored; 104 out of 185, where the persons were between 18 and 21, were white; while the whites over 21 years were extreme, representing 2769 cases in a total of 3440. A strange feature in this matter is found in the fact that, while the white breaker of the peace is disorderly generally when under the influence of liquor, the colored representative creates disturbances without the invigorating influence of drink."

The superintendent of the negro schools in 1890 seemed to realize the same facts, and he deduces from a report of the preceding year that the offenses committed by the negro youth were such "as the school-room, in its greater removal from opportunity, would have largely furnished a preventive," and adds that "it is but a reasonable inference that, as a rule, the first step to the causes leading to these arrests is idleness, and that in its continuance the step to the greater and more aggravated offenses, which the remaining cases of arrests embrace, becomes not only easier, but more and more probable. The school-room, to the extent it discourages idleness in the employment it affords, may contribute to the diminution of crime; but there must be recognized other and graver causes for it—causes that are wholly beyond its pale. After leaving it, conditions, imposed through inability to earn a livelihood, may force to the street, and thus very measurably shorten the distance to the prison."

This theory seems to be sustained by the figures of illiteracy of those arrested in recent years, for in 1877 of those arrested 8707 could read and write and 4276 could not, and in 1892 20,587 could read and write, while 6079 could not, an increase over 1891 of 206, and over 1890 of 2362, intervening years showing similar variation.

As long as comparisons of immorality and crime may be made with the whites it cannot be said that these phases of life are peculiar to the negroes, and their environments are

such as to assist them materially in whatever inclination they have to imitation. In the case of immorality alone the great majority of the mulattoes are innocent memorials of the disgraceful example in vice set the negroes by members of the white race before and since the war, and the presence of great armies at or near the capital during the war could not be regarded, as a general rule, as likely to furnish recruits from an ignorant and poverty-stricken race to the ranks of personal purity. Statistics on this subject are comparatively scarce, and may be partly explained by immigration. In 1807, of the 494 free negroes, 215 were mulattoes, but no distinction was made among the 1004 slaves; the census of 1860 showed 4500 mulattoes among 11,131 free negroes, and 933 mulattoes among 3185 slaves, a total of 5433 mulattoes in a negro population of 14,316. Of 43,000 negroes in 1870 it is estimated that 8032 were mulattoes, showing a decided proportionate decrease, and the census of 1890 shows 55,736 pure blacks and 19,836 negroes of mixed blood, of whom 1126 were quadroons and 721 octoroons. This is an increase over 1870. Some notion of the relation of the mulattoes to crime in the District is also given in the last census. There is no penitentiary in the District, but in the Reform School in 1890 were 68 whites, 119 negroes, of whom 82 were mulattoes; of paupers in the almshouse, 10 were white, 211 negroes, of whom 37 were mulattoes; and of inmates of the jail 19 were white, 169 were negroes, of whom 42 were mulattoes. This classification, though, Mr. Frederick H. Wines, the expert who prepared the special reports on this subject, thinks may not be exact.

While poverty, their previous existence without law as a rule, and the examples before them have doubtless contributed much to the active agencies against a great number of the negroes' progress to the plane occupied by the thrifty, educated and conservative middle class, other drawbacks have existed in the want of solidarity among the negroes themselves; and while some may quote the saying that all

races of the earth have been created of one blood, they seem to lose sight of the advantage of recognizing that the members of the particular negro race have been created of one blood. This state of affairs is an effect in part of the war-time distinctions, but the obliteration of these has been delayed by politics if they have not indeed been increased. The withdrawal of the suffrage from residents of the District by no means ended political life there. On the contrary, politics of the practical sort, robbed of all disguises of public policy or patriotism which usually are supposed to be the real issues upon which many voters divide, has too frequently been revealed as the bald struggle for personal preferment. This has not been confined to party or race, and the rival factions of negroes in separate Republican conventions sending contesting delegates to a national convention, but parallel rivalries among the Democrats with similar results, which, however, continue when preliminaries for inauguration ceremonies are to be arranged.[1] The negroes have not been the entire body of the party in the District with which as a general rule they have affiliated, and some curious contrasts are presented.

There are some negro Democrats, and a change of administration is likely to swell their ranks, if present indications are of value. The difference between the whites and the negroes in this particular is that the former do not permit differences, born of the heat of a campaign, to enter into their relations when a movement is started to benefit their community. Not so with the negro politicians, however. A study of the names prominent in their race's mass meet-

[1] The restoration of the suffrage is frequently urged, and an organized movement to that end has been started. Experience, though, is likely to change the signal-cry of no taxation without representation, to that of no representation without taxation, should the citizens of the District be enfranchised, and it would not be surprising if at the capital the experiment were to be made of a suffrage limited only by property or educational qualification, or by both.

ings or in undertakings expressive of their ambitions and aspirations will frequently reveal animosities of politics, causing division of views about methods of material progress. A curious manifestation of this has been the dispute at times about the celebration of the District emancipation day, opposing political leaders marshaling their respective followers about differing opinions,—one faction insisting upon a parade, another believing only in a mass meeting, at which the very sensible programme included a distribution of prizes to the young folks for the best specimens of brain-work and handicraft, and the excitement reaching such a pitch at one time that one of the orators not only expressed the opinion "that there are a great number of negroes in this city who are unfit to be free," but thought that if they continued "to follow brass bands and emancipation chariots and spend $5000 for one day's frolic or to demonstrate which is the biggest man," there could be little improvement in their condition. The climax was reached, perhaps, in 1886, when it was determined to have two parades. The leaders of the rival factions sought to secure a promise from President Cleveland to review them, but they received the following suggestive letter at the hands of his private secretary:

"Sir: It having come to the knowledge of the President, to his regret, that the differences which have existed among certain colored citizens of this city concerning the parade on Emancipation Day are not likely to be harmonized, and that two processions are contemplated, he directs me to inform you that he will not take sides in the quarrel, and therefore declines to accept either of the invitations to review the parade. If, however, he can be assured that the differences have been adjusted, I am quite sure that it would give him pleasure to accept a joint invitation to review one procession in which all shall amicably participate."

The wise advice half revealed in this letter was not followed, for the two parades took place, with brass bands and "queens of love and beauty" for both. The speech of

1891 showed that politics alone did not contribute to the dissension, and additional evidence of this was given in a letter of a few years ago, in which the writer took the ground that invidious distinctions were made in a parade of negroes only, which with its incidentals was demoralizing to the youth.

The same may be said about some of the other phases of agitation, for at a meeting in 1891, intended to assist the plan of the Educational and Relief Association of the District, which had in six months raised more than $1500 for an institution of shelter and training for negro youths in destitute circumstances, a strong criticism was made of the absence of "men of means, of influence, of popularity, of name and fame," who should have been present, and though the association had, it was said, clothed and fed 225 children and placed 155 in the public schools, one of the speakers lamented the fact that so many seats in the church were vacant when a thousand persons should have been present. Just a year after that an opposite of this situation existed in a call issued for a lecture by a well known white leader of the negroes, the proceeds of which were to be devoted to the "Industrial Institute Association" and "The Children's Home." The men of influence, means and fame signed this call. It is one of the most unfortunate facts for the negroes in the District that there the "professional negro" has found his most congenial surroundings, and though the mass are beginning to appreciate the reason for his existence, they have not yet been able to loose themselves entirely from that impediment to their more complete emancipation. The agitator of the platform and the politician of the pulpit have not yet ceased to beguile their thousands or to scatter the seeds of disunion of a race. Some may be sincere in their utterances, but the complaints which rise now and then to the surface indicate that many negroes believe that others are not, and the more general such a sentiment becomes the better chance will the race have for harmonious development.

Lack of unity, the absence to a great degree of proper race pride, are the elements of weakness in the negroes, as shown by their history in the District. The two factors have no doubt been fostered by philanthropy, theoretical and practical, and by the preponderating use of the negroes as a campaign issue, which have led them to look to the white race rather than to themselves for advancement; but while dependence may aid an individual here and there, it is likely to hamper the real development of the mass, if it does not result in actual retrogression. The negro population at the capital is as complex as it is interesting. It embraces the pure African, the negro whose blood has been untainted since his family has been in this country, the mixture of negro, white and Indian, and the various grades of the mulatto, including the children or descendants of the white father and negro mother and the children of the white mother and negro father. The native free negro and freedman, the whilom contraband, the educated or uneducated negro from many sections of the country have found their home there and form distinct types which are commingled in other classes based upon education, wealth or political influence. Dependence based upon politics seems to be lessening in its intensity, and this change will tend to obliterate the distinctions and cross purposes which now exist, the discontent and petulance which crop out at the meetings intended to strengthen the negro's position. The want of harmony is deplored by members of the race who in public speaking seek to guide their fellows into right lines instead of using them merely as instruments for their self-aggrandizement; and one of the most significant, because truthful, expressions in this direction was that of a negro woman who spoke at a meeting on the first day of this year commemorative of the act of general emancipation thirty years before.

"The achievements of which we boast," said she, "are not enough in any line to make it patent to the world that we are advancing. The individual, however learned, accomplished or

wealthy, must, in a large measure, follow the condition of his race. The whole is equal to the sum of its parts, and if ninety-nine of those parts are poverty, degradation and ignorance, the one-hundredth part counts as nothing toward changing the result as a whole. Of the many things which may be said to militate against our race, all of them might be condensed into one sentence: 'Lack of true racial pride.' Lack of unity follows almost as a matter of course.

"Of no other race can it be so truly said that the hand of every other race is raised against it, and its own hand is raised against itself. Other races are proud of their history and antecedents; we seem to wish to get as far from ours as possible; other races struggling for a foothold unite for that purpose and strengthen each other against the common enemy. Our race, alas! will not unite on either commercial or material grounds."

Study of the history of one race which many centuries ago were in a condition similar to that of the negroes before the war, impresses one with the fact that in all their struggles they have been strengthened by pride of race, which is strictly maintained to-day. When they were contending against oppressive measures which have been but faintly mirrored in the history of the freedmen, their unity of blood kept them compact, and the same principle makes their race one of the most independent ones in America to-day. It will also be remembered that when this race had been led to the borders of the Promised Land, the man who had led them out of bondage and for forty years in the wilderness was taken from them. For this there may have been other reasons than the act in Zin. A settled race requires a different sort of leader from the ruler of a migratory body; and though the history of the negroes may never parallel that of the Hebrews, they may be prevented from enjoying the full fruits of the strivings of forty years or more by the fact that their Moses of one kind or another still is with them and essays to apply past methods of leadership to present conditions, which show a change to a wonderful degree.

Sir John Lubbock tells of a plant which sprouts suddenly to some height and then by its own weight sinks to its original level, and progresses firmly and steadily by tendrils, which it sends in all directions. It may be that the negro in the District is destined to follow a similar course, and that those who have been given or who have gained by their own exertions advantages of the best sort and who have shown the possibilities of their race, will see the wisdom of reaching down to their less fortunate brethren and of encompassing the whole body in a compact, healthy growth, bound together by the tendrils of education, refinement and material prosperity, which may be the great factor for the elevation of their race in the whole country.

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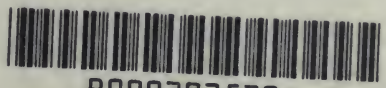

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